A SKYWALD HORROR-MOOD PUBLICATION

HOW TO SCREAM IN THIS MACABRE COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

K AUGUST 1973 75¢ 47821

SCREAM T.M.

SCREAM

SCREAM

PROLOGUE to a SCREAM . . .

. . . the art of SCREAMING is lost . . .
. . . the horrors of 1973 are not archaic horrors . . . they are EVERYDAY HORRORS, such as WAR and POVERTY . . . not the HORRORS OF THE MIND that were YESTERDAY'S everyday horrors . . .

. . . yesterday we were frightened by a footstep in the dark, the banging of a shuttered window, the wetness and the atmosphere of the local cemetery. But no more . . . now we seem to KNOW that a banging window is only the wind, that the atmosphere in a GRAVEYARD is our IMAGINATION, that the sound of a FOOTSTEP behind us is merely a MUGGER sneaking up . . . what HORROR is there about a MUGGER? Yesterday . . . that footstep meant that something DEAD and BURIED PREMATURELY had RISEN from his CRYPT . . . and a BANGING SHUTTER meant the presence of a VENGEFUL GHOST in your bedroom . . .

. . . and yesterday, when you heard the wailing of a wolf in the distance you felt FEAR well-up within . . . and yesterday, when you saw a SHADOW walking among the GRAVES on your midnight graveyard junket you covered your MOUTH with your HAND, for you were AFRAID to SCREAM; afraid that a SCREAM might wake up MORE of the DEAD . . .

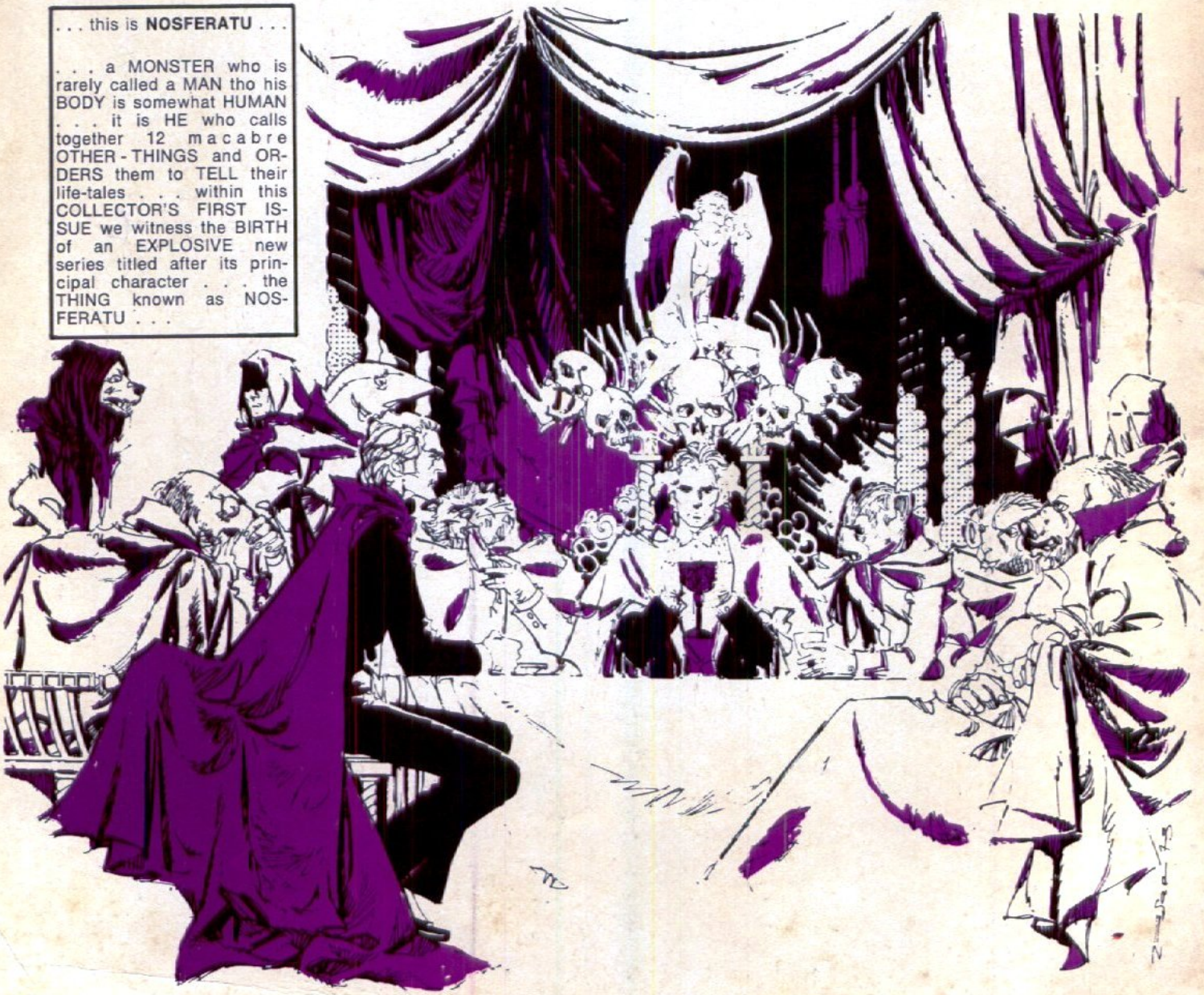
. . . the purpose of this magazine is to re-introduce you to horror . . . long LOST horror . . . long BURIED horror . . . HORROR that OUR era has never really KNOWN . . .

. . . herein the graphic-story medium's finest illustrators are collected to present eleven tales out of hell . . . eleven weirdly different and imaginative masterpieces of comic-literature . . . all-original . . . all-horror . . . never-before-published . . .

. . . this is the first issue of the magazine that is an excursion into illustrated horror . . . in I, SLIME you will meet the archaic ≡choke≡ host who will take you BEYOND the here and now as each weird tale is told . . . it is our sincere hope that the art of SCREAMING will be RE-KINDLED with this MACABRE COLLECTOR'S FIRST ISSUE . . .

. . . this is **NOSFERATU** . . .

. . . a MONSTER who is rarely called a MAN tho his BODY is somewhat HUMAN . . . it is HE who calls together 12 macabre OTHER-THINGS and ORDERS them to TELL their life-tales . . . within this COLLECTOR'S FIRST ISSUE we witness the BIRTH of an EXPLOSIVE new series titled after its principal character . . . the THING known as NOSFERATU . . .



– PUBLISHED BY: ISRAEL WALDMAN AND HERSCHEL WALDMAN
. . . COVER ARTIST . . . SEGRELLES
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DELA ROSA – DOMINGO – JOSE GUAL
RUBIO – FERRAN SOSTRES – VILLAMONTE – ZESAR

SCREAM

– EDITED AND WRITTEN BY ALAN HEWETSON –

A SKYWALD HORROR-MOOD MAGAZINE

I, SLIME

Where lunatics live

...HICKORY DICKORY DOCK...

WEIRD WARPED TALES OF LUNATIC SCREAMING HORRORS

...WEIRD COUNTS, BLACK VAMPIRE BATS AND LUNATIC HORRORS...

...THE STRANGE PAINTINGS OF JAY CRUMB...

THE TALE OF THE PERFECT CRIME

THE COMICS MACABRE

THIS ARCHAIC BREEDING GROUND...

VOLUME 1 NUMBER ONE
AUGUST 1973
. . . SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION . . .

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. . . welcome to SCREAM #1 . . .

. . . this magazine is the beginning of a new era, both for SKYWALD PUBLISHING and for YOU . . . because this magazine represents exactly what you, the reader, want to see in a HORROR MAGAZINE . . .

. . . SCREAM is the new title from the HORROR-MOOD to accompany the already-well-established PSYCHO and NIGHT-MARE magazines . . . but it's DIFFERENT from the other two titles, and here's WHY . . . every editor and publisher in this illustrated story medium is only GUESSING when a magazine is produced . . . nobody knows what the readers REALLY like and want . . . and if they don't know what you want, you obviously aren't going to get it, right? In PSYCHO and NIGHTMARE we EXPERIMENTED in a series of PHASES to FIND OUT . . . we printed A BUNCH OF QUESTIONS and then A BIGGER BUNCH OF QUESTIONS and we FOUND OUT what you liked and wanted from your thousands upon thousands of intelligent replies and letters . . .

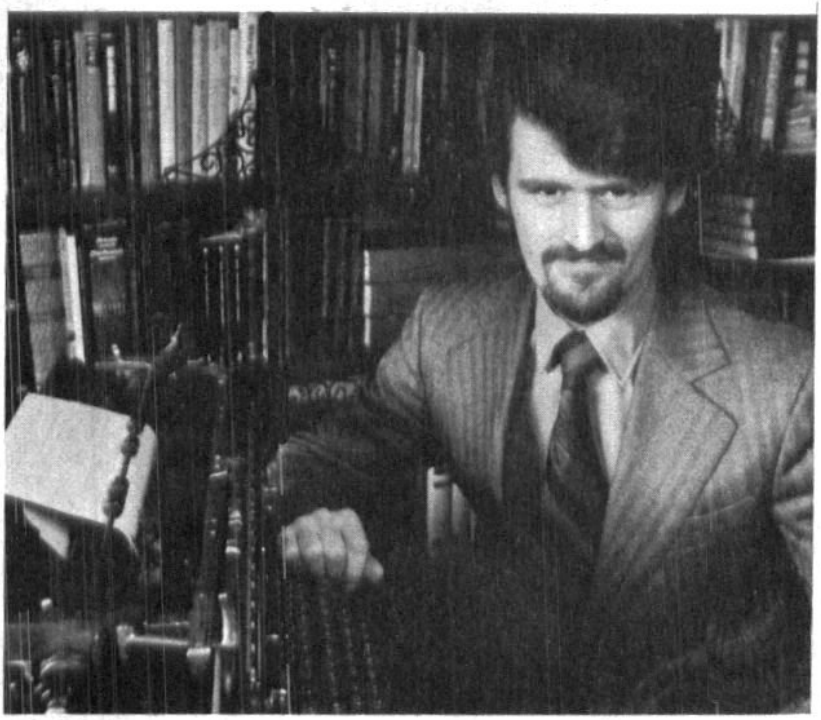
. . . well . . . here it is . . . SCREAM MAGAZINE . . . the combination of what you say you want, and our trying our level-best to give it to you . . .

. . . next issue watch for:

A CORRUPT COLLECTION OF LUNATIC LETTERS AND OBSCURE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MACABRE SCREAM MAILBAG

. . . it'll be a NEW-LOOK to letters pages designed to keep us in touch with you, to keep you up to date on news and happenings with the SKYWALD MOOD-TEAM, and to give you a chance to air your views on just about anything connected with illustrated-comic-horror . . .

. . . when you've finished reading this magazine, do yourself a favor . . . namely, write us a letter . . . or a note . . . or a postcard . . . ANYTHING . . . but let us know what you think about SCREAM and what you'd like to see in the future . . .



. . . this . . .
. . . is Archaic Al Hewetson . . .
. . . insane FOUNDER of the lunatic MOOD-TEAM and corrupt EDITOR-WRITER for SCREAM MAGAZINE . . .

. . . PHASE THREE . . . is really only the BEGINNING . . .

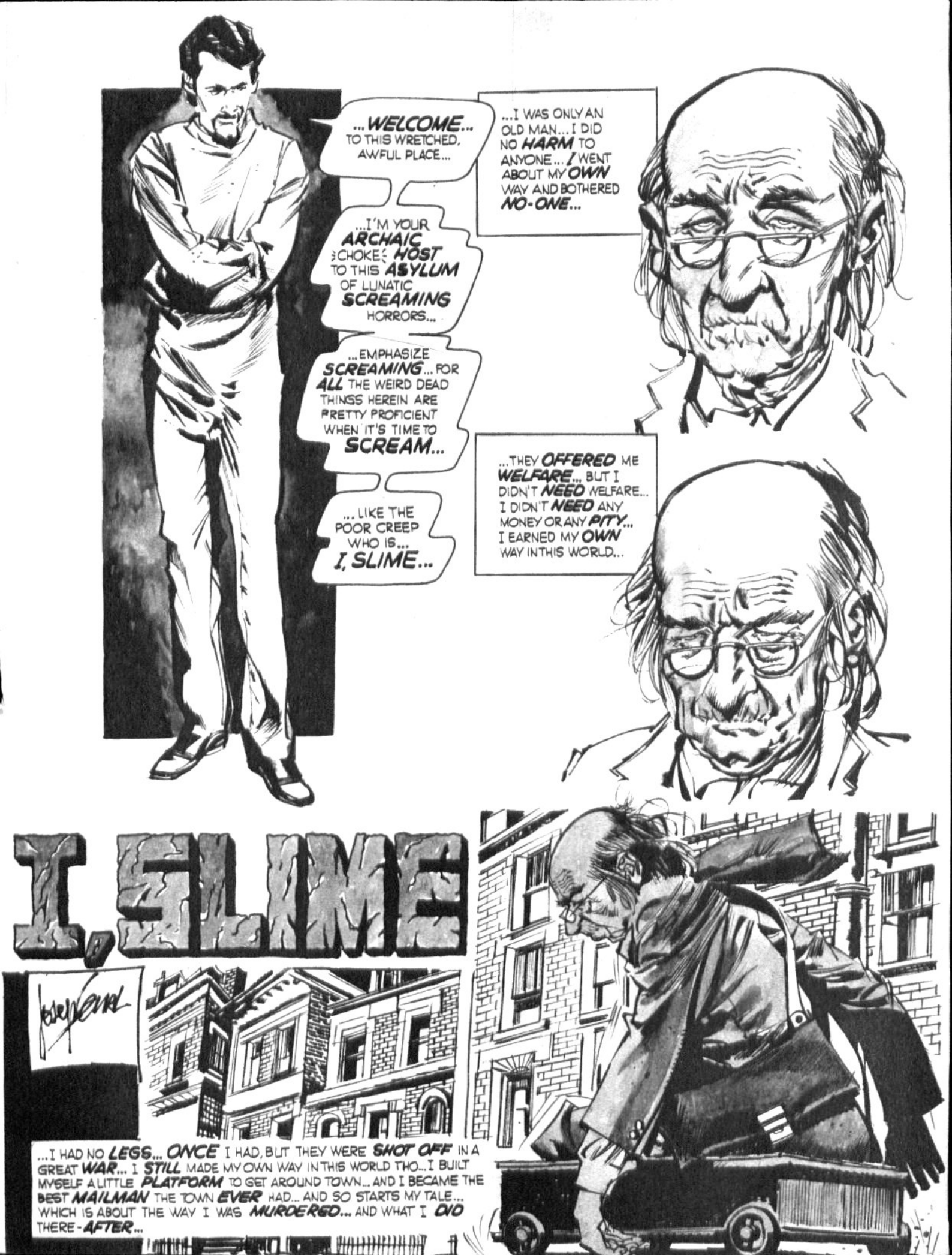
—ARCHAIC AL—
. . . your archaic editor . . .

. . . address mail to: the archaic mailbag
Skywald Publishing Corporation
18 East 41st Street Rm 1501
New York City, N.Y. 10017

...IN THIS ISSUE...
SPECIAL CENTERFOLD PULL-OUT...PIN-UP

ON PAGES 34 AND 35 OF THIS **SCREAM #1** YOU'LL FIND THE **WEIRDEST** DOUBLE-PAGE STORY **EVER...** THAT'S BECAUSE IT **ISN'T** A 'STORY'...IT'S ESPECIALLY MADE SO YOU CAN EASILY **REMOVE** IT FROM THE ISSUE AND STICK IT UP ON YOUR WEIRD WALL! BY ARCHAIC AL AND DWARFISH DOMINGO IT'S A **NEW CONCEPT** IN **PIN-UPS...** NAMELY IT'S A MACABRE LITTLE **TALE** TO **BEND YOUR BRAIN** EVERY TIME YOU SEE IT... AND IT'S A **REGULAR SCREAM FEATURE!**

...BURY YOURSELVES...
...MY SLAVES...MY BEAUTIES...YOU ARE NOT TO BE CAUGHT...BY HELSING...
...I...AM... DRACULA...
...AND AS SUCH I AM INVINCIBLE... I AM...A WOMAN... GOD...
...NO STUPID... MORTAL... CAN KILL...
DRACULA!!


...WELCOME... TO THIS WRETCHED, AWFUL PLACE...
...I'M YOUR ARCHAIC (CHOKE) HOST TO THIS ASYLUM OF LUNATIC SCREAMING HORRORS...
...EMPHASIZE SCREAMING... FOR ALL THE WEIRD DEAD THINGS HEREIN ARE PRETTY PROFICIENT WHEN IT'S TIME TO SCREAM...
... LIKE THE POOR CREEP WHO IS... I, SLIME...
...I WAS ONLY AN OLD MAN... I DID NO HARM TO ANYONE... I WENT ABOUT MY OWN WAY AND BOTHERED NO-ONE...
...THEY OFFERED ME WELFARE... BUT I DIDN'T NEED WELFARE... I DIDN'T NEED ANY MONEY OR ANY PITY... I EARNED MY OWN WAY IN THIS WORLD...
I, SLIME
...I HAD NO LEGS... ONCE I HAD, BUT THEY WERE SHOT OFF IN A GREAT WAR... I STILL MADE MY OWN WAY IN THIS WORLD THO... I BUILT MYSELF A LITTLE PLATFORM TO GET AROUND TOWN... AND I BECAME THE BEST MAILMAN THE TOWN EVER HAD... AND SO STARTS MY TALE... WHICH IS ABOUT THE WAY I WAS MURDERED... AND WHAT I DID THERE - AFTER...

...THIS IS A PEACEFUL AND GOOD LITTLE TOWN... IT IS AT THE EDGE OF THE ATLANTIC ON THE NORTH COAST, AND IS SUPPORTED BY FISHING AND A BIT OF FARMING...THE TALL BUILDING THAT LOOKS LIKE A KIND OF CASTLE IS A LUNATIC ASYLUM, WHICH SERVES THE ENTIRE STATE BY BEING WHERE INCURABLES SPEND OUT THEIR LIVES...
...EVERYDAY I WHEELED MYSELF UP THE STEEP HILL TO THAT PLACE...AND EVERY DAY I DELIVERED A FEW PIECES OF OFFICIAL MAIL TO THE NICE OLD WOMAN WHO WAS THE KEEPER'S SECRETARY...
...SHE WAS THE BEST FRIEND I HAD... SHE WAS A DELIGHTFUL PERSON...EVERY DAY SHE GAVE ME A CUP OF TEA AND SAT AND TALKED WITH ME FOR A FEW MINUTES...SHE WAS ALWAYS VERY VERY NICE TO ME...
...ONE DAY I WENT UP TO THE PLACE AND THERE WAS NO ANSWER AT THE DOOR... I KNOCKED VERY HARD...AND VERY LONG... BUT THERE WAS NO ANSWER...
...I REACHED UP AND TURNED THE LATCH AND SHOVED THE DOOR WIDE OPEN... INSIDE MY DEAR FRIEND WAS HANGING UPSIDE DOWN FROM A BIG BEAM IN THE HALLWAY... HER THROAT WAS RIPPED AND SHE WAS DRENCHED IN HER OWN BLOOD... I WEPT WHEN I SAW HER...

...IT WAS HORRIBLY OBVIOUS THE **LUNATICS** HAD **TAKEN OVER** THE ASYLUM... I COULD HEAR A SAD LAUGHTER COMING FROM UP ABOVE, OF MANY OF THEM IN HYSTERICS AS THEY TORTURED THEIR KEEPERS, AND I TURNED MY PLATFORM AROUND AND BEGAN TO WHEEL IT AWAY AS FAST AS I **COULD**...

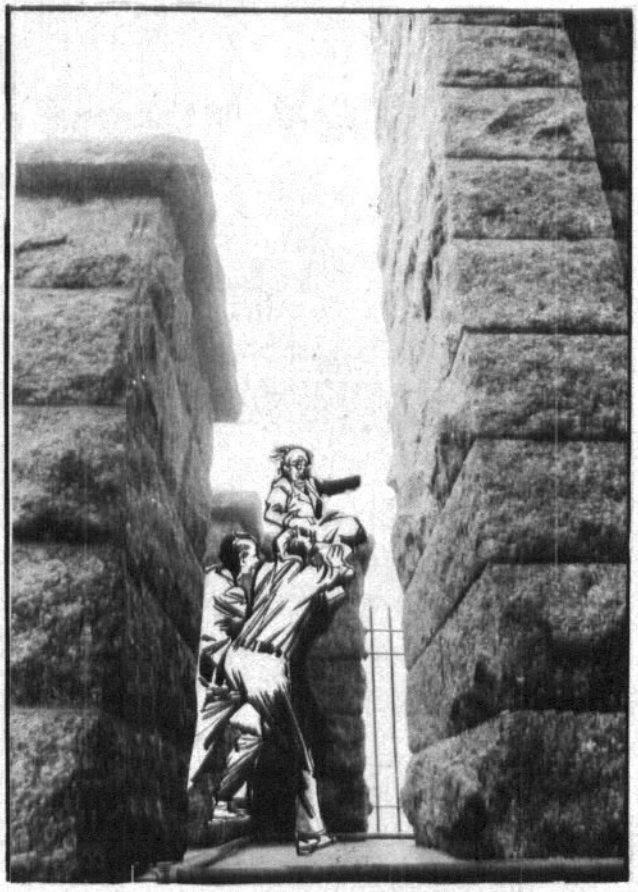
...I COULD **HEAR** THEM DIRECTLY BEHIND ME... I COULD **HEAR** THEM COMING AFTER ME CHOKING AND **LAUGHING**... MY THROAT BECAME DRY AND IT BECAME IMPOSSIBLE TO **BREATHE**... I WAS SO TERRIBLY, TERRIBLY **FRIGHTENED**... SO TERRIBLY AFRAID...

...THEY CAME UP TO ME FROM **BEHIND** AND PULLED MY CART **BACKWARDS** AT A TREMENDOUS **SPEED**, KICKING ME AND **SHOVING** ME FROM SIDE TO SIDE, STICKING THEIR **FACES** CLOSE TO MINE AND DISGUSTINGLY **SCREAMING** INTO MY **FACE** AS I **CRIED** FOR THEM TO LET ME **ALONE**...

...THEN THEY PULLED ME **AWAY** AND BROKE MY PLATFORM TO BITS, AND DRAGGED ME INTO THEIR **ASYLUM** WHILE THEY CONTINUED TO **MOCK** ME AND **SPIT** ALL OVER MY FACE AND **LAUGH**...

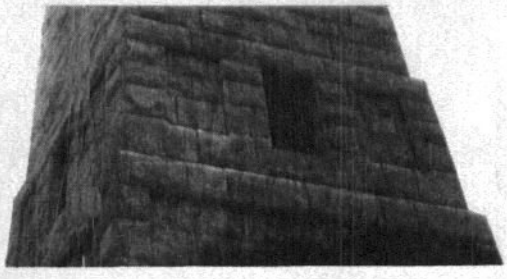
...THEY **DRAGGED** BY BY MY **ARMS** UP ALL THE **STAIRS** TO THE VERY **TOP** ON THE PLACE... MY BRUISED BODY WAS **WRETCHED** AND IN **AGONY**... MY MIND WAS IN **TEARS** AS THEY TAUNTED AND **RIDICULED** ME BECAUSE I WAS **CRIPPLED** AND COULD NOT **DEFEND MYSELF**...

...THEY **LIFTED** ME OVER THEIR HEADS ON THE OUTER **LEDGE** AND THREW ME ABOUT LIKE A **BAG OF BONES**... THEY THREW ME AGAINST THE STONE WALLS AND ALL-THE-TIME **JEERED** ME AND **LAUGHED** AND **LAUGHED** AND **LAUGHED** AT ME...



...THEN THEY LIFTED ME OVER THE LEDGE AND BRUTALLY LET ME **HANG** SUSPENDED BY MY **FINGERS** WHICH THEY **STOOD UPON** AND **CRUSHED** WITH **SMASHING BLOWS** FROM THEIR **FISTS** AND **FEET**...

...THEY LET ME **DROP** THE FULL MEASURE OF THE ASYLUM ONTO THE **PAVEMENT BELOW**... AS I **FELL** MY HEART STOPPED AND I **DIED** BEFORE I HIT THE GROUND... AND WHEN I DID HIT I WAS **TOTALLY DEMOLISHED**...



...THE **POLICE** CAME SHORTLY THEREAFTER AND **ENDED** THE LUNATICS' DISORDER AND RETURNED THEM TO THEIR **CELLS**... THE **AMBULANCE** ARRIVED AND TOOK AWAY MY DEAR **FRIEND**, AND THE VARIOUS KEEPERS WHO HAD BEEN **SLAUGHTERED** INSIDE...

...AND THEY SCOOPED UP WHAT THERE WAS **LEFT** OF ME... THERE WAS NOT VERY **MUCH** LEFT, ONLY A FLESHY PILE OF **HUMAN PULP** UPON THE PAVEMENT... JUST MESSY **FLESH**... SOME BONES... **SLIME**...

...THEY PUT WHAT THEY COULD OF ME INTO A **BAG**, AND THEY PUT THE BAG OF SLIME INTO A **COFFIN**... AND THEY **BURIED ME** ON A NICE RESPECTABLE HILLTOP IN THE GRAVEYARD OVERLOOKING THE TOWN AND THE ASYLUM... I COULD FEEL THE PRESENCE OF THE ASYLUM **STILL**... I COULD **SENSE** IT **LEERING** AT ME, **STILL MOCKING** AND **JEERING**... I COULD STILL **HEAR** THE **LAUGHTER**...

...ON THE VERY **FIRST NIGHT** I COULD HEAR THE **LAUGHTER** IN THE FETID AIR **COMING** AT ME EVEN IN MY **GRAVE**, AND I COULD NOT **STAND IT**... I COLLECTED MYSELF AND MY **ENERGIES** AND AS **SLIME** I CAME OUT OF MY **GRAVE** AND MOVED TOWARD THAT **ASYLUM**...

...I CAME UPON THAT PLACE AND I THINK THEY **SENSED** MY **COMING** FOR AS I APPROACHED THE LAUGHTER **STOPPED** AND THERE WAS SUDDENLY IN THAT PLACE AN **AWFUL LUNATIC SILENCE**... AND I ENTERED **SILENTLY** AND **UNSEEN** AND **SLID** UP THE STONE STAIRCASE...

...I CLIMBED THAT PLACE AND STOPPED AT **EVERY DOOR**...

...I FILLED THE **LOCKS** OF EVERY DOOR WITH **MYSELF**...

...MY **REMAINS** MATTED AND HARDENED AND LOCKED THE DOORS OF THE CELLS IN THE ASYLUM... LOCKED THEM AND THEY WERE **WELDED SHUT FOREVER**... THE **KEEPERS** IN THE **MORNINS** COULD NOT OPEN THEM AND THE **EXPERTS** THEY CALLED IN COULD NOT OPEN THEM...

...NOW I AM RETURNED TO MY GRAVE, WHAT IS LEFT OF ME... (FOR MUCH IS STILL BEHIND)... AND I HAVE HAD MY REVENGE AND AM HAPPY AND AT **PEACE** WITH MYSELF AND THE **UNIVERSE**...

...IT IS THE **7TH NIGHT** SINCE MY **VISIT**... THE SCREAMS ARE **LOUDER** AND **LOUDER** NOW, AND THEY ARE **HORRIBLE**... THE LUNATICS ARE **STARVED** AND AT **DEATH**... AND I HOPE **SOON** TO **RECLAIM ALL** OF ME SO THAT I MAY SPEND MY **ETERNITY** IN THIS PRETTY GRAVESITE AS **WHOLE** A MAN IN **DEATH** AS I WAS IN **LIFE**...

THERE ARE **MYTHS** ABOUT THAT PLACE THAT ARE THE **BLACKEST** AND MOST **EVIL** OF **ALL** THIS WEIRD WORLD'S WEIRD **MYTHS**... THEY ARE **SUPERSTITIONS**... AND THEY HIDE THE **TRUTH** ABOUT **TRANSYLVANIA**... **TRUTHS** THAT ARE OFTEN **MORE VILE** AND **MORE HIDEOUS** THAN THE **MYTHS**...

...SO STARTS THE **TRUTH** ABOUT:...

...WEIRD COUNTS, BLACK VAMPIRE BATS AND LUNATIC HORRORS...

...THE TRUTH BEHIND THE MYTHS ABOUT TRANSYLVANIA

...THE MOST POPULAR **MYTH** IS THE **DRACULA MYTH**...CREATED BY **BRAM STOKER** IN HIS FAMOUS HORROR NOVEL OF THE LAST CENTURY...

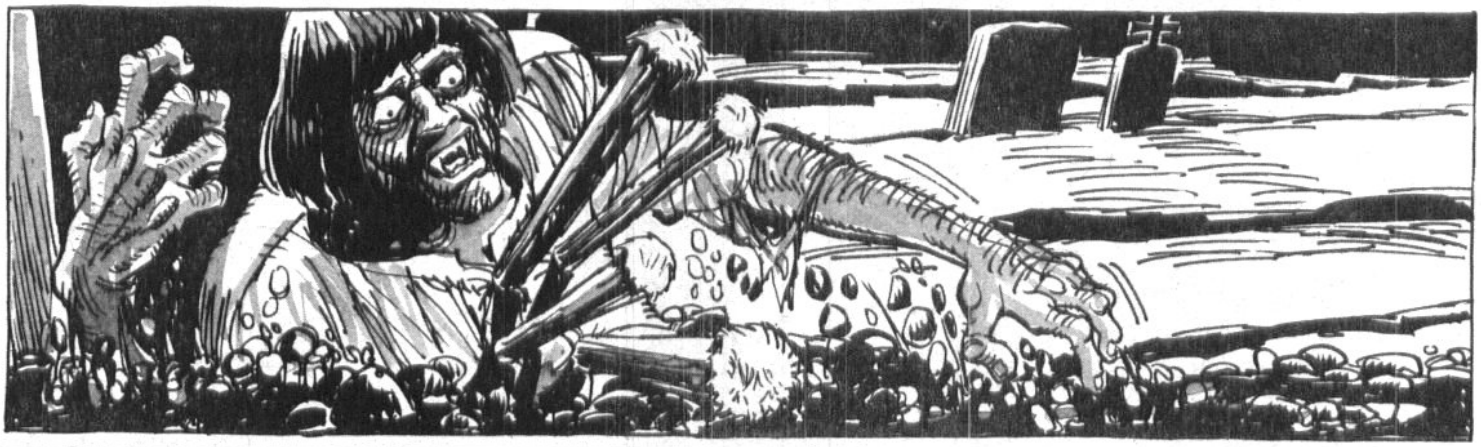
...DRACULA IS **NOT** A **MYTH**...STOKER NEVER VISITED TRANSYLVANIA BUT A HUNGARIAN SCHOLAR-FRIEND, **ARMINIUS VAMBERRY**, TOLD HIM OF THE AWFUL EXPLOITS OF TRANSYLVANIA'S 15TH CENTURY RULER, **VLAD TEPES**, WHO HAD CALLED HIMSELF **DRACULA**. STOKER THEN STUDIED THE FIEND'S LIFE, AND THE **SUPERSTITIONS** OF **TRANSYLVANIA**, NOW **RUMANIA**, AND COMBINED HISTORY AND FICTION TO CREATE HIS **COUNT DRACULA**...

...**VLAD** WAS **DEFINITELY** MORE **FIENDISH** THAN THE **FICTIONAL** CHARACTER...

...HE WAS A BRUTAL, SADISTIC TORTURER; A MASS BUTCHER AND MURDEROR; AND PROBABLY A **LUNATIC!** KNOWN AS THE **'IMPALER'**, HIS FAVORITE FORM OF DEATH WAS DRIVING HIS VICTIMS ONTO SPEARS AND SPIKES PROTRUDING FROM THE GROUND... IN **ONE DAY** HIS CONQUERING ARMY WAS MADE TO INHUMANLY SLAUGHTER **10,000 PRISONERS** IN THIS UGLY FASHION...

...THIS... IS AN **HISTORICAL FACT**...

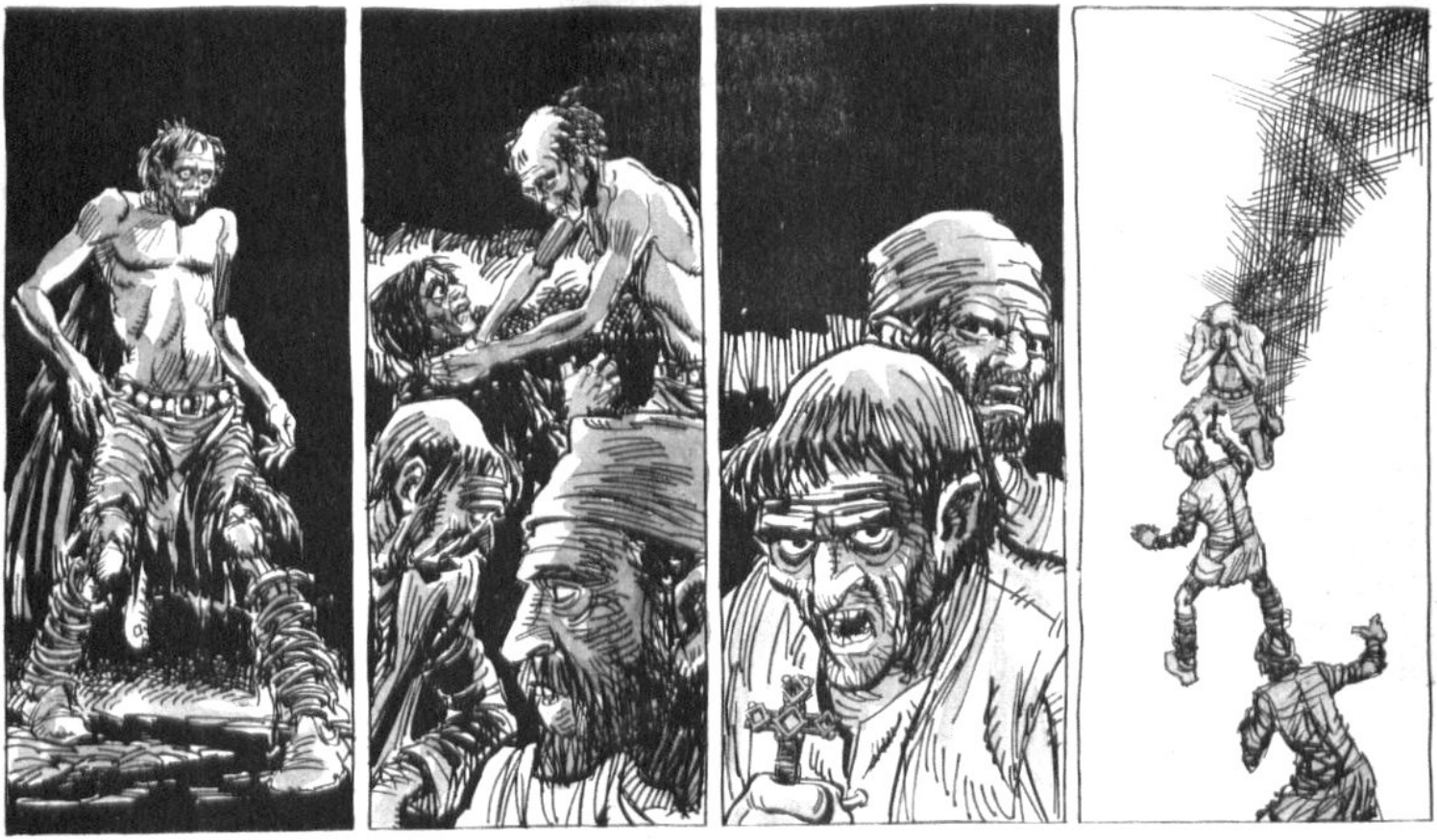
...RUMANIAN VILLAGE BELIEFS ARE VERY VERY NUMEROUS AND STRANGE... IN CENTURIES PAST THE UNEDUCATED PEASANTS HELD MANY RITUALS WHICH THEY BELIEVED PROTECTED THEM FROM THE UNDEAD... IN THE DISTRICT OF TELEORMAN 3 DAYS AFTER A DEATH THEY WOULD THRUST 9 SPIKES INTO THE GRAVESITE...



...THIS... ACCORDING TO THE MYTHS OF GENERATION AFTER GENERATION OF TRANSYLVANIANS, WAS TO PIERCE THE HEART OF THE VAMPIRE WITH THE SHARP NEEDLE POINTS WHEN HE AROSE FROM THE GRAVE...

...IN THE ROMAVATI DISTRICT THE PEASANTS TOOK THE DEAD WHO THEY SUSPECTED MIGHT TURN INTO VAMPIRES TO A FOREST... AND THERE HIS BODY WAS HACKED TO SHREDS...

...THEY THREW EACH BIT OF HIM INTO A FIRE TILL THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT OF HIM... ALL HIS FLESH... ALL HIS BONE... IT ALL HAD TO BE TOTALLY CONSUMED BY THE FLAMES, FOR IF ANYTHING WHOLE REMAINED IT WOULD BE ENOUGH OF A CATALYST FOR THE VAMPIRE TO MATERIALIZE...



MYTHS DICTATE THAT VAMPIRES MUST CONFORM TO A CERTAIN ***STEREO-TYPE***... ONE THAT IS QUITE ***DIFFERENT*** FROM THOSE PRESENTED IN THE ***MOVIES***...

...A VAMPIRE IS A ***WALKING CORPSE***, NOT AFFECTED BY ***SUNLIGHT*** AT ***ALL***, BUT SERIOUSLY ENDANGERED BY EVEN THE PRESENCE OF ***SILVER***, ANYTHING HOLY AND BLESSED BY THE CHURCH, OR BY GARLIC AND HAWTHORN BRANCHES...

...THE TRANSYLVANIAN BELIEF IN VAMPIRISM ORIGINATES FROM THEIR **MAGYAR** ANCESTORS WHO PERIODICALLY WORSHIPPED AN OBSCURE **BAT-GOD**... WHICH IN TURN ACCOUNTS FOR THE LATER PROMINENT **MYTH** THE **VAMPIRES** HAD THE POWER TO TURN INTO **BATS**...

...BUT **NOT VAMPIRE-BATS,** WHICH IRONICALLY AREN'T FOUND IN **TRANSYLVANIA** AT **ALL**... BUT ONLY IN **SOUTH AMERICA**...

...THE BELIEF IN VAMPIRES WAS **SUBSTANTIATED DAILY** BY THE GREAT NUMBERS OF PERSONS WHO WERE VICTIMS OF **PREMATURE BURIAL**...

...THESE WRETCHED PEOPLE WHO WERE LITERALLY **BURIED ALIVE** ROSE UP AND OUT OF THEIR CRYPTS TO CLAIM **RE-BIRTH,** ONLY TO BE **MURDERED** BECAUSE THEY WERE THOUGHT TO BE **VAMPIRES**..

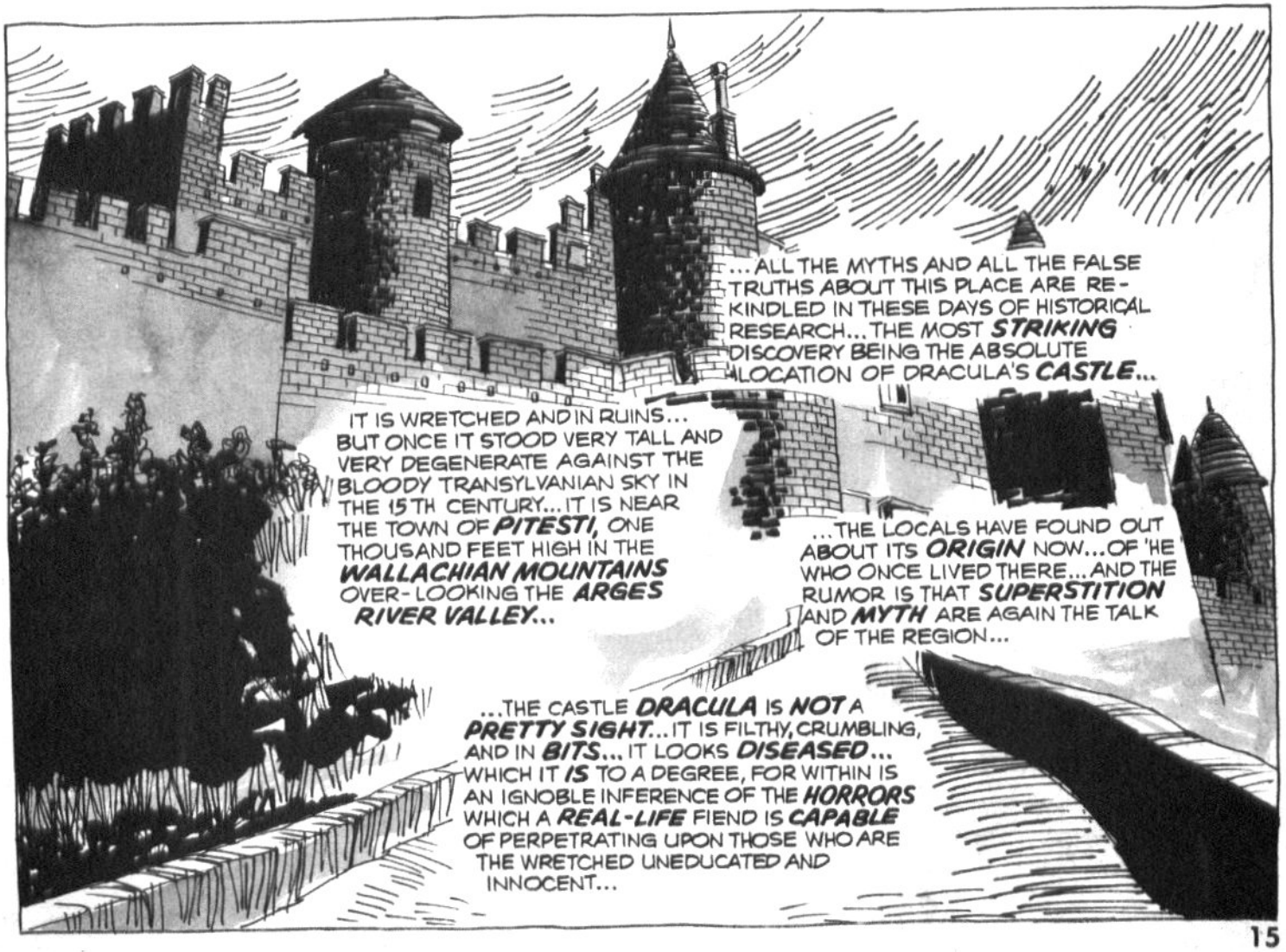
...THE **BELIEF** IN **VAMPIRISM** IS **DIRECTLY RELATED** TO **PREMATURE BURIAL**... WHICH UNFORTUNATELY, WAS **NOT UNCOMMON** AT **ALL** IN OLDEN TIMES... THIS... IS AN **HISTORICAL FACT**...

...VAMPIRES ALSO **CONTROL** WOLF-PACKS... AND THEY OFTEN REPORTEDLY LED THE FOUR-LEGGED BLOOD SUCKERS INTO 'BATTLE'...

...**LYCANTHROPY** IS ALSO A MYTH OF THIS REGION... THE BELIEF IN **WEREWOLVES** ALL STEMMED FROM THE BELIEF THAT VAMPIRES COULD **DISGUISE** THEMSELVES BY TURNING INTO VARIOUS **ANIMALS**... SUCH AS BATS, CATS, DOGS, OWLS, RATS, FLIES AND **WOLVES**...

...***TRANSYLVANIA*** IS A NAME FIRST USED IN THE 12TH CENTURY, AND MEANS 'BEYOND THE FOREST' (ONE WHICH BORDERED ***TRANSYLVANIA*** AND ***HUNGARY***)... IT IS AN AREA OF 21,297 SQUARE MILES, CONTAINED ON THE NORTH AND EAST BY THE CARPATHIAN ALPS, ON THE SOUTH BY THE TRANSYLVANIAN ALPS, AND ON THE WEST BY THE BIHOR MOUNTAINS, AND HAS A POPULATION CURRENTLY OF 7,000,000 PERSONS...

...THE LAND IS MOSTLY A ***PLATEAU***... SUPPORTING ITS INHABITANTS BY YIELDING WINE, FRUIT, CEREALS, MINERAL RESOURCES SUCH AS METHANE GAS AND IRON, AND SUPPORTING HEALTHY LIVESTOCK...

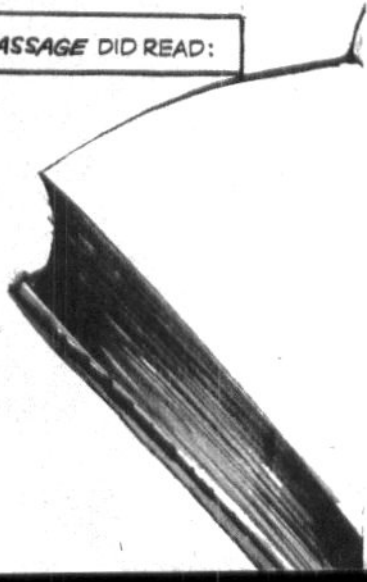

...ALL THE MYTHS AND ALL THE FALSE TRUTHS ABOUT THIS PLACE ARE RE-KINDLED IN THESE DAYS OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH... THE MOST ***STRIKING*** DISCOVERY BEING THE ABSOLUTE LOCATION OF DRACULA'S ***CASTLE***...
IT IS WRETCHED AND IN RUINS... BUT ONCE IT STOOD VERY TALL AND VERY DEGENERATE AGAINST THE BLOODY TRANSYLVANIAN SKY IN THE 15TH CENTURY... IT IS NEAR THE TOWN OF ***PITESTI***, ONE THOUSAND FEET HIGH IN THE ***WALLACHIAN MOUNTAINS*** OVER-LOOKING THE ***ARGES RIVER VALLEY***...
...THE LOCALS HAVE FOUND OUT ABOUT ITS ***ORIGIN*** NOW... OF 'HE WHO ONCE LIVED THERE... AND THE RUMOR IS THAT ***SUPERSTITION*** AND ***MYTH*** ARE AGAIN THE TALK OF THE REGION...
...THE CASTLE ***DRACULA*** IS ***NOT*** A ***PRETTY SIGHT***... IT IS FILTHY, CRUMBLING, AND IN ***BITS***... IT LOOKS ***DISEASED***... WHICH IT ***IS*** TO A DEGREE, FOR WITHIN IS AN IGNOBLE INFERENCE OF THE ***HORRORS*** WHICH A ***REAL-LIFE*** FIEND IS ***CAPABLE*** OF PERPETRATING UPON THOSE WHO ARE THE WRETCHED UNEDUCATED AND INNOCENT...

18TH *AUGUST, 1972:*

...I CAME TO THIS PLACE IN AN AUGUST DAY WHEN THE ICE WAS DRIVEN THROUGH THE FETID AIR LIKE SNOW... MY SHIP: *THE PROVIDENCE,* BECAME ICE LOCKED IN THE HORRIBLE DRIFTS OF MARIONETTE COVE... AND WE ARE FORCED TO SET UP ALMOST PERMANENT QUARTERS IN THIS MAD CORNER OF *ANTARCTICA*... FOR WE KNOW NOT HOW MANY LIFETIMES WE WILL HAVE TO WAIT TO BE FREE...

...I HAVE ACQUIRED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MY SEARCHES THE MAD AND ANCIENT CHRONICLES. *THE NECRONOMICON,* BY THE MAD ARAB ABDUL ALHAZRED (ORIGINALLY TITLED *AL AZIF; AZIF* BEING THE WORD FREQUENTLY USED BY THE ARABS TO DESIGNATE THAT NOCTURNAL SOUND SUPPOSED TO BE THE HOWLING OF DAEMONS), WHICH IS ON LOAN TO ME FROM THE MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY NEAR MY HOME IN *ARKHAM* IN NEW ENGLAND, WHICH I HOPE WILL FURTHER AID ME IN MY SEARCH FOR THE *MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS* IN THIS BLEAK ANTARTICA, IN WHICH I AM IN SEARCH TO FIND AN ANCIENT AND FORBIDDEN CITY AS REVEALED BY HOWARD P. LOVECRAFT IN HIS MACABRE NOVEL: *AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS* (1931 ARKHAM HOUSE) WHICH I AM OF THE OPINION WAS BASED ON ACTUAL AND PERSONAL RESEARCH BY THIS AUTHOR...

...AND THE *NECRONOMICON PASSAGE* DID READ:



...ON THIS FIRST NIGHT OF MY FORCED STAY IN THE FROZEN COVE, AS I READ OF DARK AND ARCHAIC THINGS LONG VANISHED FROM THIS EARTH, THERE CAME TO MY EARS A MAD GROAN THAT CAME THROUGH THE AIR SEEMING TO PORTRAY A BODY IN GREAT DISORDER... THE SOUND WAS LUNATIC AND AWFUL... IT WAS OF NOTHING I HAD EVER CONCEIVED...

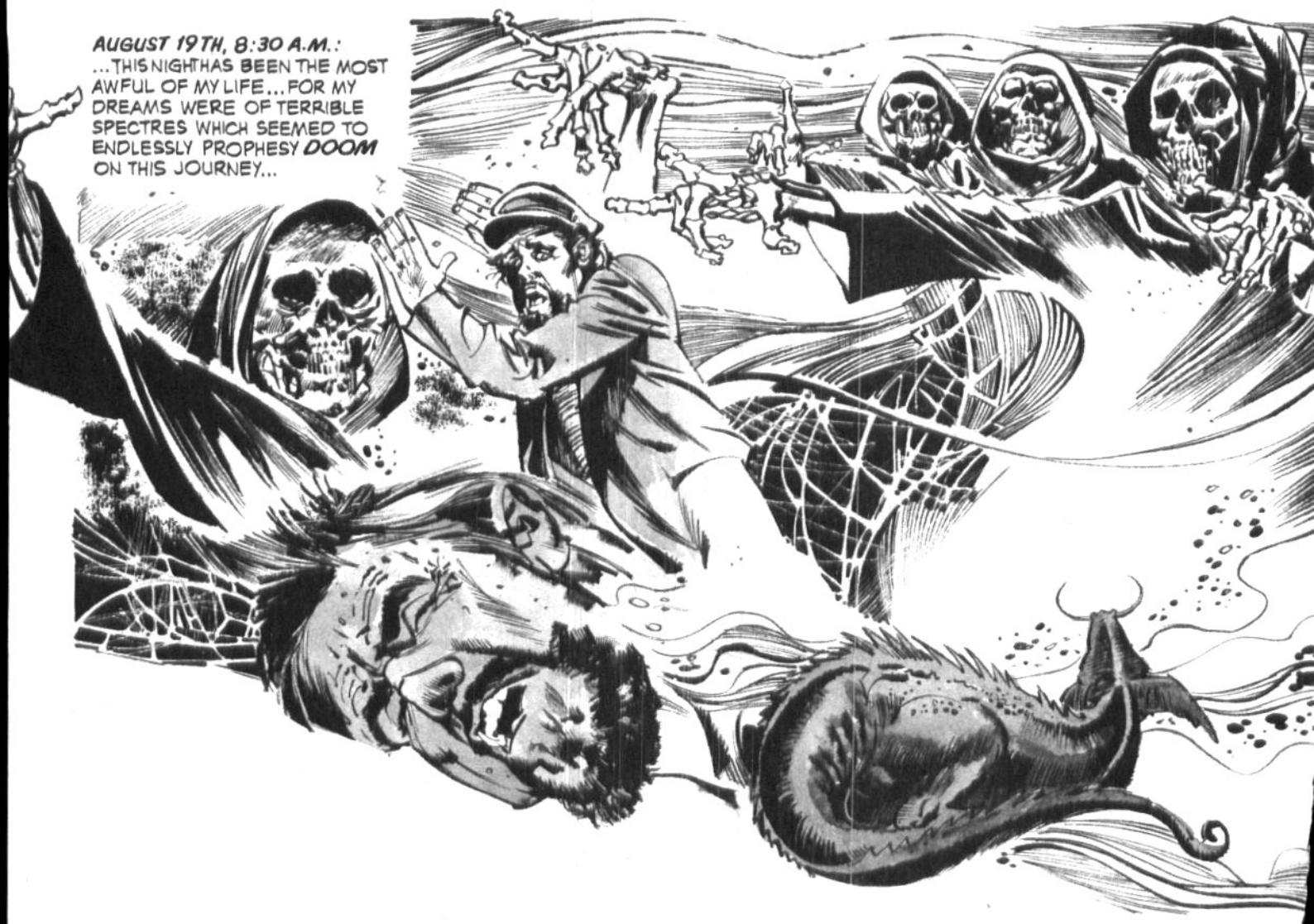
...SAVE IN A PASSAGE FROM THE BOOK WHICH FELL FROM MY HANDS AS I TREMBLED... A ***DESCRIPTION*** -- HARD TO PERHAPS ACCEPT IN TERMS OF 1972 REALITY -- BUT WHICH TO MY ASTONISHMENT RANG TRUE AS I CHANCED TO GLIMPSE THROUGH THE PORTHOLE AND SEE ***IT*** STANDING NEARBY... WATCHING... WAITING... WARNING...

AND SO STARTS OUR TALE...
...CONTINUING THE CTHULHU MYTHOS STABLISHED BY ***H.P. LOVECRAFT***...

...THE SHOGGOTH DO IFFUE A MOFT HORRIBLE NOIFE THAT BALEFULLY CRY TO THE PIT OF THE EARTH... IT DO REDUCE THE STRONGEFT OF MEN TO DUFT IN INTENFITY... FOR IT BE IFFUED AS A WARNING THAT HE WHO EVILLY DO FOUAT ON HIF KAUNCHEF AND DO NOT BREATHE; (FOR HE HATH NO NEED AND IS ALREADY DEAD), IF NOW PREPARE TO PERFORM AN UNHOLY ACT... AND WHAT-EVER THAT ACT BE... IT BE AN EVIL DEMONFTRATION WHICH WILL END IN MANY ***DEATHF***...

THIS ARCHAIC BREEDING GROUND...

AUGUST 19TH, 8:30 A.M.:
...THIS NIGHT HAS BEEN THE MOST AWFUL OF MY LIFE... FOR MY DREAMS WERE OF TERRIBLE SPECTRES WHICH SEEMED TO ENDLESSLY PROPHESY ***DOOM*** ON THIS JOURNEY...



...THE PROCESSING OF THE FILM WAS OF COURSE IMMEDIATE... AND THE THING CAPTURED ON THAT PLATE WAS WITHOUT MISTAKE, AS I PERHAPS EXPECTED, THE SAME ***BRUTAL AND INHUMAN CONCOCTION OF HELL THAT I SAW LAST NIGHT THROUGH THE PORTHOLE OF THE SHIP***... THE MEN ARE AS ASTONISHED AS I -- BUT YOU MUST REALIZE; THEY ARE SO *MOVED* BECAUSE THEY HAVE NEVER ***CONCEIVED*** OF SUCH A BEING...

...WHILE I AM AT THE POINT OF EMOTIONAL COLLAPSE... ... BECAUSE THE ***ORIGIN*** OF THIS THING IS RECORDED IN THE ATROCIOUS ***NECRONOMICON***... AND ITS PRESENCE HERE AND NOW IS AN IMPLICATION I WOULD RATHER ***NOT*** BE AWARE OF...

4:30 P.M.:
...IT WOULD SEEM OUR SEARCH HAS NOT BEEN IN VAIN, FOR LOVECRAFT'S DIRECTIONS HAVE BEEN EXPLICIT... AND WE WERE LEAD TO THE PLACE OF WHICH HE WAS SO ROMANCED WITHIN A FEW HOURS... ALTHOUGH I ADMIT TO HAVING OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT OUR FINDING THE ***DEAD PLACE*** SO EASILY ... FOR A FEW MOMENTS THOROUGHLY SUPPOSING TO BELIEVE THAT WE WERE ***DRAWN*** BY ***FORCES*** OUTSIDE OUR OWN ***BEINGS***... WHICH SOMEHOW ACTED TO PULL US LIKE TOY PUPPETS TO THIS AWFUL CITY WHERE ONCE LIVED THE ***MASTERS OF THE EARTH 3 MILLION YEARS AGO...***

...THE HORRIBLE ROBED SPECTRES CROWDED AROUND ME AND BEGGED OF MY HASTY DEPARTURE FROM THIS PLACE -- BUT ALAS, EVEN WOULD I SO ELECT TO LEAVE IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE... FOR WE ARE HOPELESSLY TRAPPED IN THE ICE BOUND WATERS OF THE HELL-PLACE AND WE CAN NOT POSSIBLY ANTICIPATE DEPARTURE FOR QUITE A FEW MONTHS... TILL SUMMER COMES AND THE ICE MIGHT PERHAPS BREAK AND PERMIT OUR RELEASE...

12:30 A.M.:

...THE MORNING WAS FILLED WITH ACTIVITY AND GRANTED LITTLE OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO SULK... FOR WE PREPARED TO VENTURE OUT INTO THE WASTES IN SEARCH OF THE DEAD CITY WHICH LOVECRAFT HAS REPORTED...

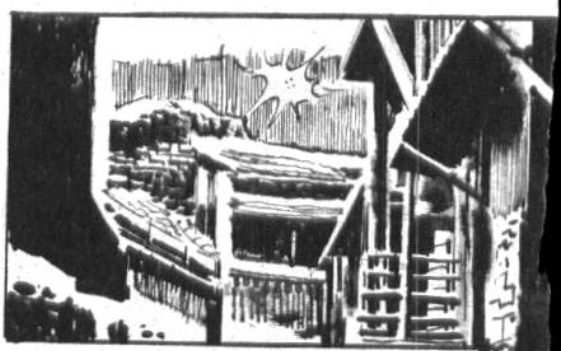
...A FEW MINUTES AGO THE LABORERS SET UP A TENT SO THAT WE MIGHT PAUSE FOR SOME FOOD, AND I SET UP IN TURN MY POLAROID CAMERA TO RECORD THE NATURE OF THE AREA, AND AS I FOCUSED UPON A LARGE AND LOOMING PRECIPICE NOT FAR FROM THE CAMP I BELIEVED I SAW SOME MOVEMENT -- I RELEASED THE SHUTTER WITHOUT HESITATION...

...WE TOPPED THE INITIAL PLATEAU AT 4:00 AND THE SIGHT WE SAW MIGHT SCARCELY BE CONSIDERED OF NATURAL ANTARCTIC ORIGIN, AND SERVED ONLY TO CONFIRM MY EVERY HOPE THAT LOVECRAFT'S WRITINGS WERE INDEED AUTHENTIC... ...THE DEAD AND DISEASED PLACE THAT LIES BEFORE ME AS I WRITE -- ***STINKS***... ...IT SMELLS OF FETID DECAY AND TURNED OUR STOMACHS TO A MAN... IT IS TO US ALL A SITE OF UTTER FOULNESS, AND EVEN THE WHITE ANTARCTIC SKY SEEMS TO TURN BLACK AND HORRID SHADES OF GRAY AS IT WATCHES DOWN UPON THIS ANCIENT AND SICK CITY...

7:30 P.M.:
... THE CITY IS DESERTED, QUITE DEVOID OF ANY MANNER OF LIVING THING, ALTHOUGH AS WE APPROACHED WE SAW SEVERAL BLIND ALBINO PENGUINS SCUTTLING INTO NARROW AND AWKWARD CAVES...

...AS WE BEDDED DOWN FOR THE NIGHT I COULD NOT TRULY RELEASE FROM MY MIND THE PICTURE I HAD TAKEN OF THE THING ON THE PRECIPICE, AND THE HOWLING SIHLOETTE I OBSERVED LAST NIGHT, AND BECAME SO SUDDENLY AND INTENSELY FRIGHTENED THAT I FELT I COULD ENDURE THE SECRETS OF THE ***NECRONOMICON*** NO LONGER... AND BEGGED MYSELF TO TELL THE OTHERS TO HAVE THEM SHARE IN MY UTTER APPREHENSION... BUT NO... I DARE NOT... FOR TO TELL THE OTHERS WOULD INSTILL AN EVEN GREATER FEAR OF THIS PLACE... AND PERHAPS CAUSE THEM TO RETURN TO THE SHIP AND ABANDON THE DISCOVERY GROUNDS...

WALKING THROUGH THE HIGH WALLED STREETS OF THIS PLACE WAS THE CAUSE OF MUCH UNREST AMONG THE MEN... BUT I HARDLY CRITICIZED THEM... FOR MY OWN HEART POUNDED A MILE TO THE MINUTE... AND RACED INTO REALMS OF HORROR EVERY TIME WE TURNED A CORNER TO SEE MORE OF THE MAD BUILDINGS SO CLEARLY DESCRIBED IN ALHAZRED'S ***NECRONOMICON***... WHEREIN FOUL AND DEPRAVED THINGS ONCE CARRIED ON A DAY TO DAY UNRULED EXISTENCE THAT WOULD QUESTION ANY MAN'S ABILITY TO MAKE REASON OUT OF MADNESS...



2:00 P.M. AUGUST 20TH:
...STANDING ALONE AND WATCHING THE GREY SKY AS I ENTERED THAT LAST PASSAGE IN MY DIARY I CHANCED TO SEE A LIGHT FROM A HIGHER AREA... AND ALTHOUGH MY ENTIRE BODY SHOOK WITH BIZARRE CONJECTURE ABOUT ITS ORIGIN... MY SCIENTIST'S NATURE FORCED ME TO WALK IN ITS DIRECTION... LEAVING THE OTHERS SLEEPING BEHIND ME... LEAVING: THEREFORE; THE RELATIVE SAFETY OF NUMBERS...

...EVERY MAN IN OUR SMALL GROUP IS EXCITED TO THE POINT OF EXHAUSTION...AND BEFORE LONG THE MILES OF CORRIDORS AND DOORS AND AGE-BLEACHED ROOMS HAD ITS EFFECT...WE WERE FORCED BY THE VERY NATURE OF OUR HUMAN CONSTITUTION TO RELAX OUR PACE TO A SLOW CRAWL...AND AT 7:00 DECIDED TO MAKE CAMP FOR THE NIGHT IN ONE OF THE DWELLINGS...

...WHAT I SAW AS I TURNED THE LEDGE COULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD BY A MORTAL BRAIN... FOR THERE, THINGS DEAD FOR A MILLION YEARS SAT SQUATTED NEAR A MONSTROUS SPACE CONTRAPTION WHERE GAUNT OTHER THINGS, NEARER HUMAN (PERHAPS), CROWDED AROUND A MECHANICAL FIRE THAT LIGHTED THEIR CRUDE FACES AND ILLUMINATED BOORISH GRINS THAT LIFTED AND SUNK THEIR EXPRESSIONS AS I WATCHED...

...WHATEVER MAD PURPOSE THIS MEETING HAD, THIS MEETING OF ANCIENT OLD ONES--CALLED ***SHOGGOTHS*** BY THE ***NECRONOMICON***--AND BEING FROM ANOTHERWORLD, WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS...BUT IT WAS HORRIBLY APPARENT IT WAS A PURPOSE DISGUSTINGLY ***EVIL***...

...I WAS TORN WITHIN MYSELF... KNOWING NOT WHETHER TO LEAVE THIS UGLY PERFORMANCE NOW BEFORE ME, OR TO REMAIN AND STUDY THE ***MEANING***... I DECIDED TO ***STAY***--FOR IN MY UTTERLY MUDDLED MIND I CAME TO BELIEVE THAT NOTHING NEW, NO MATTER HOW VICIOUS OR PITIFUL IT MIGHT BE, COULD ACTUALLY BE ***WORSE*** THAN MY PRESENT KNOWLEDGE... THAT WHATEVER I MIGHT NOW LEARN WOULD MERELY COMPOUND MY HORROR... NOT TORMENT ME ***MORE***...

...WHAT ***FOOLS*** WE MORTALS BE...

...AS I WATCHED, THE SPACECRAFT BEGAN TO SHUDDER, AS IF IT WERE STARTING ITS MOTORS, AND THERE WAS MUCH MOVEMENT AND RUNNING ABOUT IN THE AREA...I BEGAN TO THINK THEY WERE PREPARING TO LEAVE...

...I COULD DO NAUGHT BUT... ***SCREAM***...

...THIS PLACE, THIS MEETING OF ***OBSCENE MINDS*** WAS FOR A SINGLE, THO OBSCURE, ***PURPOSE***... TO ***BREED***...

...***WHY***--I DON'T ***KNOW***...***WHY***--I DON'T ***CARE***... SOME DISGUSTING MUDDLING OF SPECIES... A FOUL INTER-STELLAR INTER-MARRIAGE OF CORRUPT BODIES TO BREED A NEW RACE OF DEAD-DEMI-GODS TO RULE ON SOME...

...OH...

...SOME FILTHY OTHER-ISLAND...

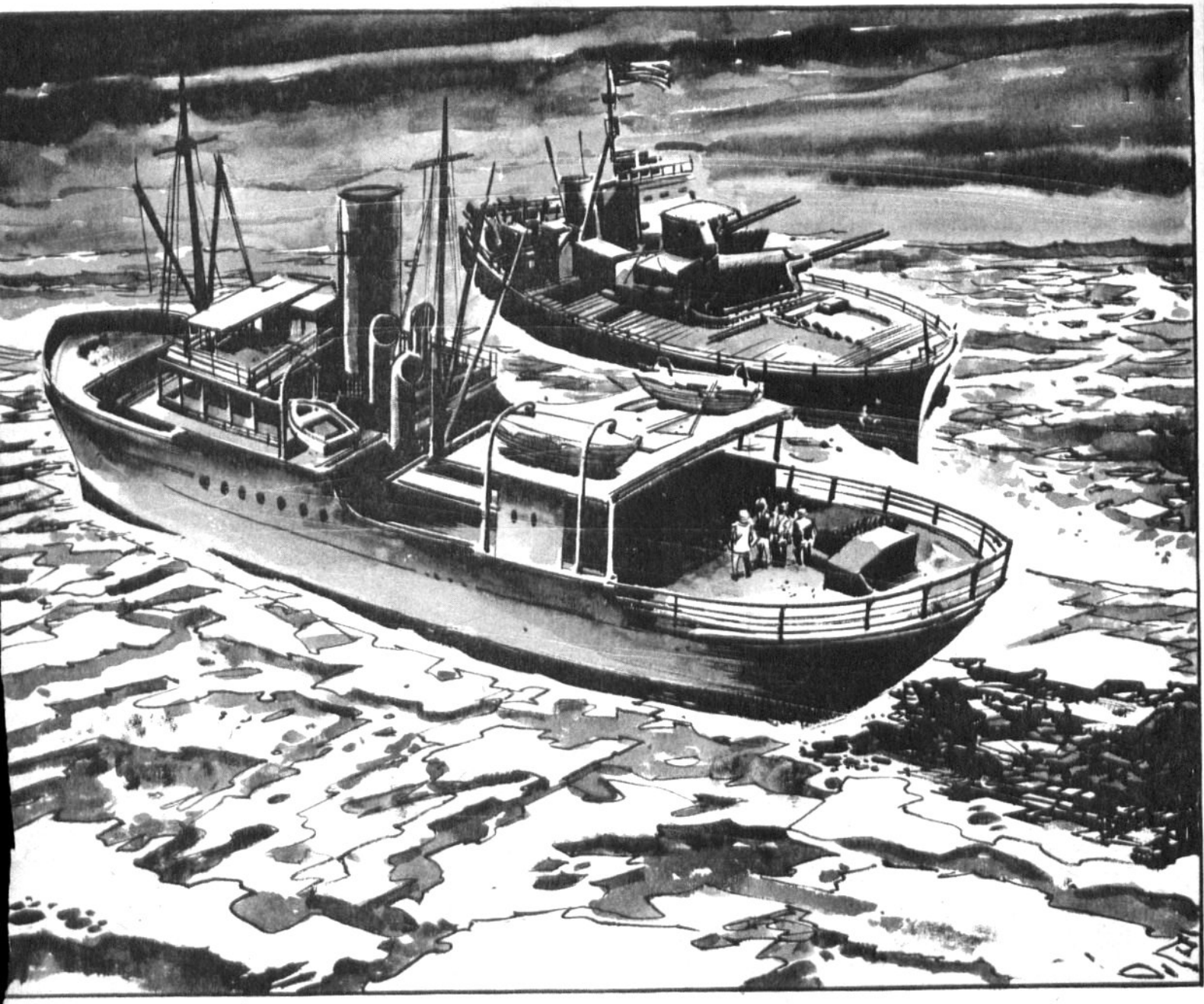
...SOMEWHERE...

GO MY AAA EEEAA

GOD NONO

...THEN AS I OBSERVED A PECULIAR AND ODD SHAPED OPENING IN THE GROUND NEAR THE OTHER-WORLD MACHINE, THE REALITY OF THE EVIL IN THIS PLACE STARTED TO OWERWHELM ME...
...THEY BROUGHT THE INFANTS OUT IN TINY BASKETS WHICH SLAVE-WOMEN CARRIED ABOUT ON THEIR SHOULDERS...
...AND SCREAM
...AND SCREAM...
...AND THEN AS I NEARED THE PLACE WHERE I LEFT THE MEN ASLEEP I SAW THE SHOGGOTHS... CRAWLING ABOUT... EATING THEM...

...NOW I SIT ALONE WITHIN THIS ICE-STUCK VESSEL OF DOOM... HOW I EVER MADE IT HERE I WILL NEVER KNOW... ALTHOUGH MY LEGS YET ACHE FROM RUNNING, AND MY BREATHING IS STILL LABORED FROM THE PRESSURES AGAINST MY LUNGS AS I COVERED 18 MILES OF FROZEN TERRITORY ON FOOT...
...WHY I HAVE COME HERE I DO NOT KNOW... FOR I REALIZE THEY WILL SOON BE AFTER ME... PERHAPS I FEEL DUTY BOUND TO RECORD THIS ADVENTURE INTO HORROR FOR OTHERS... TO WARN THEM... TO WARN YOU...
... THEY COME NOW... I KNOW THEY DO - OH GOD - I KNOW THEY DO -- I CAN FEEL THEIR PRESENCE... THE EVIL IS IN THE STERILE FRIGID AIR...
...I MUST HIDE THIS NOW... FOR I HEAR THEIR FEET AS THEY TROD THE DECK ABOVE ME... I HEAR THEIR SCREAMS... THEIR CRIES ... OF A SINGLE MAD WORD:
TEKELI-LI! TEKELI-LI!
OVER AND OVER... OH GOD!...



PUBLISHERS NOTE:

THE ORIGINAL HANDSCRIPTED MANUSCRIPT FOR THIS 'STORY' WAS FOUND ABOARD THE ***PROVIDENCE,*** A SAILING VESSEL SET OUT OF ARKHAM IN JULY OF 1972 AND BOUND FOR CERTAIN AREAS OF ANTARCTICA ON A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION. THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THIS CRAFT WAS RECORDED IN FEBRUARY OF 1973, WHEN MRS. WHIPPLE BENEFIT, OF 66 COLLEGE STREET IN ARKHAM, BECAME CONCERNED AT HAVING RECEIVED NO RADIO MESSAGE FROM HER HUSBAND, AND CONTACTED A ***U.S.*** NAVAL BASE IN ANTARCTICA. THE AUTHORITIES THEN MADE A SUCCESSFUL SEARCH FOR THE LOST ***PROVIDENCE,*** WHICH THEY FOUND IN MARIONETTE COVE, AN ICE-BOUND INLET DEEP INTO THE FROZEN COUNTRY. NO TRACE OF MAN, LIVING OR DEAD, WAS FOUND IN THAT SHIP, AND THE ONLY SUGGESTION OF **WHAT** HAD HAPPENED WERE IN THESE NOTES FOUND IN A LOWER CABIN WITHIN A LOCKED SAFE, WHICH WERE GIVEN TO MRS. BENEFIT, AND IN TURN TO MR. HEWETSON, OUR EDITOR, UPON A RECENT TRIP TO ARKHAM. MR. HEWETSON MADE CERTAIN INQUIRIES FURTHER TO THIS M.S. AND FOUND INCONSISTENCIES BETWEEN THE WRITTEN ACCOUNT HEREIN AND THE ACCOUNT OF THE INVESTIGATORS AT THE SCENE; THE MOST SINGULAR DISCREPTANCY BEING THAT: EARLY IN HIS NOTES MR. BENEFIT HAD CLEARLY STATED HE HAD ***WITH HIM*** THE PRICELESS POSSESSION OF ***MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY...*** THE ***NECRONOMICON...*** (AS WELL AS LOVECRAFT'S OWN BOOK: ***AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS)...***

... SERIOUS DOUBT IS CAST ON THE CREDIBILITY OF MR. BENEFIT BECAUSE AUTHORITIES REPORT NO FIND OF THIS MATERIAL WHATSOEVER, ALTHOUGH ALL OTHER MATERIAL WAS ***INTACT.*** FURTHER, THE ***NECRONOMICON*** WAS FOUND ***REPLACED*** IN ITS GLASS CABINET AT THE ***MISKATONIC LIBRARY*** ON THE MORNING OF THE 21ST OF AUGUST, 1972, THE DAY FOLLOWING THE ALLEGED OCCURENCE SUGGESTED BY MR. BENEFIT. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW EXACTLY IT ***GOT THERE,*** IT CANNOT POSSIBLY HAVE TRAVELLED FROM ANTARCTICA TO NEW ENGLAND OVERNIGHT... AND HENCE,... THE PUBLISHERS GIVE NO CREDIT TO THIS STORY WHATSOEVER... AND HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO REGARD IT AS A FICTIONAL ACCOUNT OF A RATHER DISTURBED MIND...

...THIS YOUNG MAN IS *DISTURBED*...
...HIS MIND, AFTER 14 YEARS IN THIS NEW YORK CITY ASYLUM, IS AS *UNBALANCED* AS WHEN HE ENTERED AS A *CHILD*...

...HE IS *ANTHONY CAPPELLI*... OF THE UPPER EAST SIDE, A SECTION OF NEW YORK WHICH IS *RICH*... AND SOMEWHAT *WEIRD*... 14 YEARS BEFORE THIS DAY HE WAS *COMMITTED* HERE WHEN HE KILLED HIS *MOTHER*... HE KILLED HER WHEN SHE CAME AT HIM WITH A *BUTCHER KNIFE*...

...TODAY... *ANTHONY CAPPELLI* WILL KNOW WHAT IS KNOWN AS 'FREEDOM OUTSIDE THE WALLS'... HE IS BEING *RELEASED* FROM THIS PLACE BECAUSE THE DOCTORS BELIEVE HE IS 'ADJUSTED TO THE NORMS OF SOCIETY'... THAT, HOWEVER, DOESN'T MEAN HE'S *CURED*... NOT BY A *LITHE-LONG-SHOT*...

...SO STARTS OUR TALE...

...HICKORY DICKORY DOCK...

...AN AWKWARD ANALOGY...

FERRÁN SOSTRES

...DOCTOR?...
...YES...
...YOU ARE RELEASED...
...COME WITH ME AND WE'LL SEE ABOUT SOME STREET CLOTHES!
...THESE CLOTHES SEEM TO FIT ME PERFECTLY!
...THEY SHOULD ...THEY WERE MADE FOR YOU...
YOU'VE BEEN IN HERE SO LONG TONY...THAT... THE MEDICAL STAFF HAVE COME TO CONSIDER YOU AS A FRIEND NOT JUST A PATIENT...
...THEY ALL CHIPPED IN AND... HAD THIS SUIT MADE FOR YOU...
...I'M... ...NOT SURE I REALLY WANT TO LEAVE DOCTOR... I'M CURIOUS ABOUT THE 'OUTSIDE' BUT I...
...I FEEL A GREAT DEAL OF SECURITY INSIDE...
...THIS IS ONLY NATURAL ANTHONY... IT'S BEEN YOUR ONLY HOME FOR MANY YEARS...
...FEEL FREE TO COME BACK ANYTIME YOU LIKE... FOR COUNSEL OR... TO SEE YOUR FRIENDS...

...ANTHONY CAPPELLI IS RELEASED... IT IS LATE AFTERNOON... IN HIS POCKET IS A 20 DOLLAR BILL AND AN IDENTIFICATION TAG... HE LOOKS UP AT THE LATE AFTERNOON SKY AND REALIZES IT IS FRESHER AND BIGGER THAT IT LOOKED THROUGH THE ASYLUM WINDOWS... AS HE WALKS, HE THINKS... AND HE BEGINS TO REMEMBER...

...WHEN HE WAS 6 HIS FATHER DIED, LEAVING HIS MOTHER IN A STATE OF DEPRESSION... SHE WAS DEPRESSED LIKE THIS FOR A YEAR OR MORE...

...AND WHEN SHE BECAME **FREED** FROM IT SHE **TURNED** ON THE ACCEPTED SOCIAL **NORMS** IN SOCIETY... SHE TURNED INTO A **BRUTAL** AND **POWERFUL WOMAN**... SHE TURNED FROM THE CONVENTIONAL RELIGIONS TO PRACTICE **SATANISM**...

...YOUNG ANTHONY WAS **TAUGHT** THE WAYS OF THE CULT, AND THE WAYS OF **WITCHCRAFT**, THE **OCCULT** AND **DEMONOLOGY** BY AN OLD WOMAN... MARIA SANTA...WHO TAUGHT HIM **WELL** THE **BLACK HISTORY** AND **PRACTICES** OF THIS **BLACK RELIGION**...

...WHEN HIS MOTHER ATTACKED HIM HE TURNED THE KNIFE INTO HER WITH MORE REASON THAN A WISH TO **SURVIVE**... IT WAS WITH **DELIGHT**...HE HAD NOTHING AGAINST HER, PERSONALLY, **DEATH** WAS JUST A PART OF HIS **WAY OF LIFE**...

...AND YOUNG ANTHONY LEARNED TO ENDURE HS MAD MOTHER... LEARNED TO ACCEPT AS FACT THE MACABRE UNDERWORLD OF SATAN... IT WAS UNSURPRISING THAT THE MAJOR AILMENT THE DOCTORS TREATED HIM FOR WAS HIS BELIEF THAT HE ALONE DID NOT CONTROL HIS DESTINY...HE BELIEVED... IT WAS...CONTROLLED BY A POWERFUL AND EVIL OTHER- GOD...

...NOW HE SITS ALONE IN A RESTAURANT... HE SEES THE EYES ALL FIXED ON HIM... NEVER HAS HE SEEN SO MANY EYES... HERE, IN THIS WORLD, HE IS WITHOUT FRIENDS OR GUARDIANS... AND HERE, WITH NOTHING TO DO AND NO-ONE... NO-ONE... TO DO ANYTHING WITH...
...HE REVERTS BACK...
...I CAN'T STAND IT... ...THEY'RE ALL STARING AT ME... WHY... WHY MUST THEY GLARE AT ME...
...MY GOD...THE AIR FEELS GOOD...
...CAN'T BREATHE WHEN SURROUNDED BY SO MANY AWFUL PEOPLE... ...WHY MUST THEY STARE AT ME... WHY CAN'T THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER...
DRACULA... ...HE IS LIKE ME... HE KNOWS WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE ALONE... TO BE STARED AT!
BELA LUGOSI IN DRACULA
AS ONLY HE IS!

...WHY DO YOU TORMENT ME...YOU CANNOT PROVE YOUR ACCUSATIONS HELSING... ...GET AWAY FROM ME... GET AWAY FROM MY CASTLE...
LEAVE ME ALONE
...YOU FIRE MY CASTLE... ...YOU THINK FLAMES CAN HURT ME?... I... AM DRACULA...
FIRE!
...THE THEATER IS ON FIRE...
...YOU CANNOT KILL ME... ...I AM DRACULA... DRACULA CANNOT DIE... ...DRACULA MUST NOT DIE!!
...YOU WILL NOT DIE... DRACULA...
MY GOD... YOU'RE CRUSHING ME... CRUSHING ME... DON'T PANIC...
...YOU MUST NOT KILL DRACULA...
...DRACULA MUST BE IMMORTAL!
YOU ARE IMMORTAL...
...YOU WILL NOT DIE...
...I WILL TAKE YOUR PLACE...
...I AM DRACULA...

...THERE'S A MAN TRAPPED IN THERE...
...THEN... ...HE'LL STAY IN THERE... NO ONE CAN GET IN OR OUT NOW... ...THE PLACE IS A FIERY HELL!
...YOU ALRIGHT MISTER? YOU DON'T EVEN LOOK SINGED...
FOOLS... ...TO THINK THAT A SIMPLE FIRE COULD KILL DRACULA IS... ...IS UNTHINKABLE.
ALRIGHT?... I NEVER FELT BETTER IN MY LIFE... A STUPID FIRE CANNOT KILL ME...
...MY GOD...
MERCEDES FIGG COSTUME SHOPPE
COSTUMES AND DISGUISES FOR ALL OCCASIONS
PROFESSIONALLY FITTED
...A COSTUME SHOP... HAA... I WILL NEED CLOTHES MORE SUITED TO MY TRUE IDENTITY AS DRACULA THAN THESE COMMON PEASANTS' SHREDS NOW ON MY BACK...
ALSO LEATHER GARMENTS AND WHIPS

...I AM MERCEDES FIGG... MAY I HELP YOU?...
...I AM... LOOKING... FOR A SUITABLE OUTFIT...
...WELL HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE IT SIR?...
...WITH ONE WORD... A NAME...
... DRACULA...
...DRACULA... YES... ONE OF OUR MOST POPULAR REQUESTS IS FOR DRACULA'S GARMENTS... WE HAVE A LARGE SELECTION OF BLACK ROBES, AND CANES... WHITE FRILL DRESS SHIRTS...
EXCELLENT MISS FIGG... EXCELLENT...
...NOW AS TO PAYMENT SIR...
PAYMENT? MISS FIGG... ...REALLY!!!
EEAAAAMYGOD!!
MORTUARY
A MORTUARY... HERE... ...HERE... I WILL FIND MANY THAT ARE SUITABLE...
DIE NOW... PAY LATER... REASONABLE RATES
MY GOD... IT'S... ALMOST DAYLIGHT... I'VE SPENT THE NIGHT...
...I MUST FIND A COFFIN... NOW... IF I'M NOT IN A COFFIN WHEN THE SUN COMES UP I'LL BE BURNED TO A CRISP BY THE SUN...

...OUT WITH THIS CORPSE...
...HE CAN SHARE A COFFIN WITH ANOTHER...
... BUT I...
... DRACULA
...NEED
PRIVACY!...
...AT 10 THAT MORNING, AS ANTHONY CAPPELLI SLEPT THE ETERNAL DEAD SLEEP OF A DRACULA... A CEREMONY WAS HELD IN THAT MORTUARY CHAPEL...
...NOW...
...I LAY ME DOWN TO...
...SLEEP...
...WE NOW COMMIT OUR DEPARTED BROTHER TO HIS ETERNAL GRAVE...
... ASHES TO ASHES...
... DUST TO DUST...
...MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE...
...WHEN THE FLAMES LEAPED AT DRACULA'S THROAT HE DID NOT WAKE... WHEN THE FIRE ATE UP HIS LEGS HE DID NOT MOVE... WHEN HIS SOUL WAS BURNED DRACULA DID NOT FLINCH...
...DRACULA CANNOT DIE BY FIRE... DRACULA IS IMMORTAL...
...BUT...
ANTHONY CAPELLI ...HE SCREAMED HIS LUNGS OUT!

...THIS...
...IS BELA LUGOSI AS DRACULA...
...NEVER HAS AN ACTOR SO DEVOTEDLY PORTRAYED A CHARACTER ON THE SCREEN... THE PERFORMANCES OF LUGOSI WERE SO TERRIBLY REAL THE ACTOR NEVER ESCAPED BEING IDENTIFIED WITH THE MADMAN-DRACULA... HE BROUGHT TO THE SCREEN A TERROR AND EXCITEMENT ONLY A LEGITIMATE ACTOR COULD... WE PROUDLY LOOK AT A CLOSING SCREAM SCREEN SCENE FROM THE FIRST OF MANY DRACULA FILMS...
...BURY YOURSELVES...
... MY SLAVES... MY BEAUTIES... YOU ARE NOT TO BE CAUGHT... BY HELSING...
...HE WHO HUNTS... ME... HOUNDS ME... SOON HE WILL ENTER MY... PALACE... DEFILE MY OWN COFFIN AND PREVENT MY... RETURN...
...HE THINKS I WILL... DIE... IF I DO NOT HAVE MY COFFIN WITH ITS IMPORTED TRANSYLVANIAN DIRT...
...HOW... WRONG... AND... STUPID... HELSING IS... HOW STUPID HUMANITY IS TO THINK SO... SIMPLE... AN ACTION WOULD DESTROY AN... UNDEAD PRINCE...

...I...AM...
DRACULA...
...AND AS SUCH I AM INVINCIBLE... I AM... A HUMAN... GOD...
...NO STUPID... MORTAL... CAN KILL...
DRACULA!

THIS MACABRE CASTLE WE SEE RISING OUT OF THIS CRAGGY ISLAND IS JUST OFF THE COAST OF SPAIN... IT IS A PLACE THAT FOR CENTURIES HAS BEEN THE HOME OF BATS, RATS, AND WILD LUNATIC ANIMALS... NO *MEN* HAVE DARED TO APPROACH THESE SHORES FOR THE LEGENDS ARE MANY AND *AWFUL*...

...BUT THE *BEINGS* YOU NOW SEE CLIMBING THE STRANGE STONE STEPS COVER THEIR FACES WITH MACABRE MASKS... MASKS TO HIDE FEATURES THEMSELVES AS TORMENTED AND ANCIENT AS THE ISLAND THEY NOW VISIT--TWISTED BY EVENTS WE SHALL ALL SOON LEARN OF IN A CONTINUED SERIES...

...BUT BEFORE THAT...

...A *PROLOGUE*...

...WHEREIN WE SHALL EXPLAIN THE STRANGE PURPOSE OF *WHY* THIS PLACE HAS BEEN RESURRECTED FROM ITS ANCIENT LONELINESS...

PROLOGUE:

NOSFERATU IS THE ONE WHO STANDS *TALLEST*... THE THING WHO WALKS *PROUDEST*...HE IS *HOST* TO THE OTHERS WHO GATHER AFTER RECEIVING HIS OBSCENE SUMMONS SENT BY DEMONIC MESSENGER TO THE MANY-MYRIAD COUNTRIES OF THEIR *ORIGIN* THROUGHOUT THE WORLD...

...A SUMMONS WHICH MERELY INSISTED: *COME*... BUT WAS SOMEHOW *ENOUGH* TO THESE MASKED MEN FOR IT WAS SIGNED: *NOSFERATU*... A NAME THEY HAD KNOWN EVEN AS *CHILDREN*...

...FOR *NOSFERATU* IS A *SYMBOL*...

...OF DEATH...

...OF MADNESS...

...OF OCCULT EVIL

... AND SO STARTS OUR TALES OF THE MAD-DEMON NOSFERATU...

Where lunatics live

...WHY ARE WE HERE?...
TOLD HERE... ONE BY ONE THEY WILL BE PERFORMED FOR AMUSEMENT PURPOSES ALONE...
...I WHO AM EVIL... I, WHO DEMAND YOUR ATTENTIONS FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF A FEW MOMENTS ENTERTAINMENT -- I MERELY HAVE TO SUGGEST YOUR PRESENCE HERE AND YOU IMMEDIATELY HAVE TO RUSH TO DO MY BIDDING...
THAT SHALL SHORTLY BE MADE OBVIOUS...
...FOR IS THIS ROOM WE NOW ENTER NOT SO CONSTRUCTED AS TO BE A THEATER?...
... ARE THE MASKS I ASK YOU TO WEAR NOT HIDING FACES THAT ARE IN THEMSELVES ENTIRE 5 ACT PLAYS?...
...THAT... CREEP... IS WHY YOU ARE HERE!!...
...NOW THAT YOU ARE SEATED I WILL INTRODUCE YOU TO EACH OTHER... TO MY RIGHT -- FROM THE UNITED STATES... WEARING A FROG'S HEAD... THE MAN-THING CALLED CHARLES FREEMAN...
... BESIDE HIM FROM SPAIN... UNDER A WOLF'S HEAD... FERNANDO DOMA...

...AND FROM *BRITAIN*... WEARING THE MASK OF A COMMON HOUSEHOLD *CAT*... *SIR DONALD HOWAROS*...

...THEN FROM *FRANCE*... WEARING A FETID *RODENT* HEAD... JACQUES DUPOIN...

...FROM *GERMANY*... *HORSCH HEINDRICH*... SNICKERING DISGUSTINGLY UNDER HIS *GOAT'S* MASK...

...FROM THE *WEST INDIES*... SIMPLY ROBED IN ALL-WHITE... *SINNER CANE*... AN *ASSUMED NAME* NO DOUBT...

...COMING FROM *RUSSIA*... LOOKING LIKE THE *PIG* HE TRULY *IS*... *ANTON DUBCHEK*...

...ONLY 8 OF THE 11 I INVITED ARE HERE... THE OTHERS WILL.....

...AND FROM *BRAZIL*... LOOKING LIKE A *SHARK* FROM HIS NATIVE WATERS... *SEÑOR RAMON VORSE*...

...ALTHOUGH I SEE NOW THE 9TH HAS *ARRIVED*... IN THE GUISE OF A HIDEOUS *BAT*...

VRRRISSHHHH

...AM I *LATE*?...

...I RECEIVED NO *MASK*!!...

...NO... BUT YOU WERE *INSTRUCTED* TO WEAR A *MASK*... WHY HAVE YOU NOT GOT IT ON?

...HOWEVER... I WILL DON ONE *NOW* TO CONFORM IF YOU WISH... CONFORM TO THE GUISE OF THE *OTHERS* HERE TONIGHT...

...NO... IT IS NOT NECESSARY... NOT REALLY...

...YOU CAN TELL YOUR TALE FIRST... STAND IN THE CENTER AND TELL US OF YOUR RECENT *RE-BIRTH*...

...FOR, GENTLEMEN, THIS BEING YOU SEE BEFORE YOU...

--IS NONE OTHER THAN THE ORIGINAL RE-BORN VLAD THE IMPALER OF 15TH CENTURY *RUMANIA*... THE MAN-THING WHO IS NONE OTHER THAN *DRACULA*...

...THE *ONE DRACULA*... *THE ONLY DRACULA*... HE WHO WAS AND IS AND WILL ALWAYS BE... THE HATED MASTER OF *ALL* VAMPIRES... ***DRACULA!***

AND SO NOW, OFFICIALLY, STARTS *CHAPTER ONE*:
... A DRACULA IS AMONGST US...

...ONLY WEEKS AGO IS WHEN MY LIFE ***BEGAN***... BEGAN IN SEEDY SURROUNDINGS IN A LITTLE CLUB IN ***GREENWICH VILLAGE*** IN THE FOREIGN CITY KNOWN AS ***MANHATTAN***...

THERE... A GROUP GATHERED AND ONE STOOD TO SPEAK WITH MUCH EXCITEMENT FOR SHE HAD DISCOVERED IN A SILENT LITTLE BOOKSTORE CERTAIN ARCHAIC DOCUMENTS WHICH SEEMED TO INDICATE TO HER A FACT THAT PERHAPS NO-ONE ELSE HAD KNOWN...

...IT IS HARD FOR ME TO BELIEVE IT EVEN NOW... AND I HAVE POURED OVER THESE YELLOWED PAPERS FOR ***WEEKS***...

YOU PERHAPS HAVE WONDERED WHY I HAVE NOT ATTENDED MANY MEETINGS OF LATE--IT IS FOR THE SAME REASON THAT I HAVE SLEPT ***LITTLE***... EATEN ***NOTHING***

...BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN ***OBSESSED*** BY THESE ***PAPERS***...

SO ***TELL US***... WHAT MAKES THEM SO ***IMPORTANT*** TO YOU?

THEY REVEAL...

...ARE YOU READY FOR THIS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF SATAN?...

...THEY REVEAL THE LOCATION FOR THE ***TOMB*** OF ***DRAC***

...I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT... OH GOD...

...WHAT UTTER ***NONSENSE***...

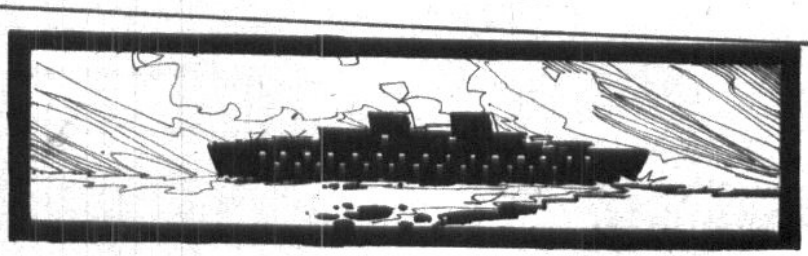
LISTEN, BROTHER--YOU THINK I'M GOING TO STAND UP HERE AND PUT MY REPUTATION ON THE LINE WITH SOMETHING THAT'S ***NONSENSE?***

--IT'S ***NOT*** NONSENSE--

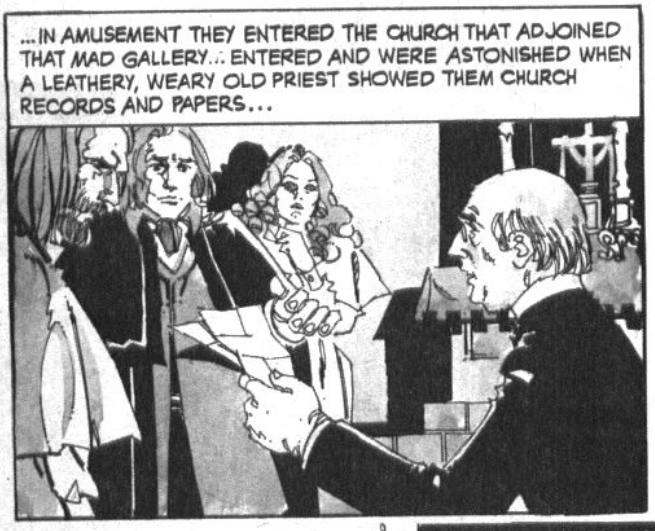
NO

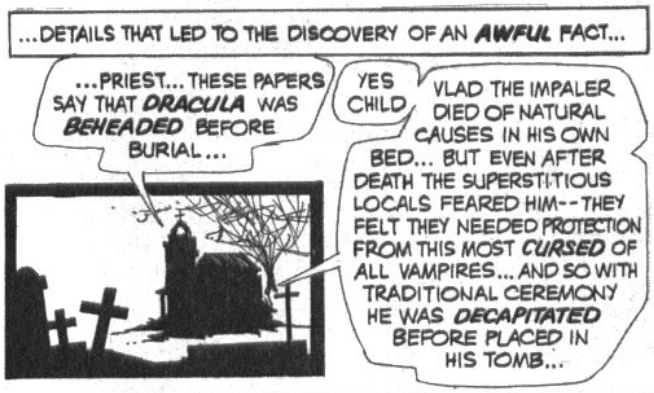
...SHE SHOWED THEM THE PAPERS... SHE WAS BELIEVED AFTER MUCH ARGUING...

...THE GROUP ELECTED TO VISIT THE TOMB IN OLD WALLACHIA... NOW RUMANIA--THEY SELECTED 3 MEMBERS TO MAKE THE TRIP... AND WITHIN A FEW DAYS THE 3 WERE CROSSING THE ATLANTIC...

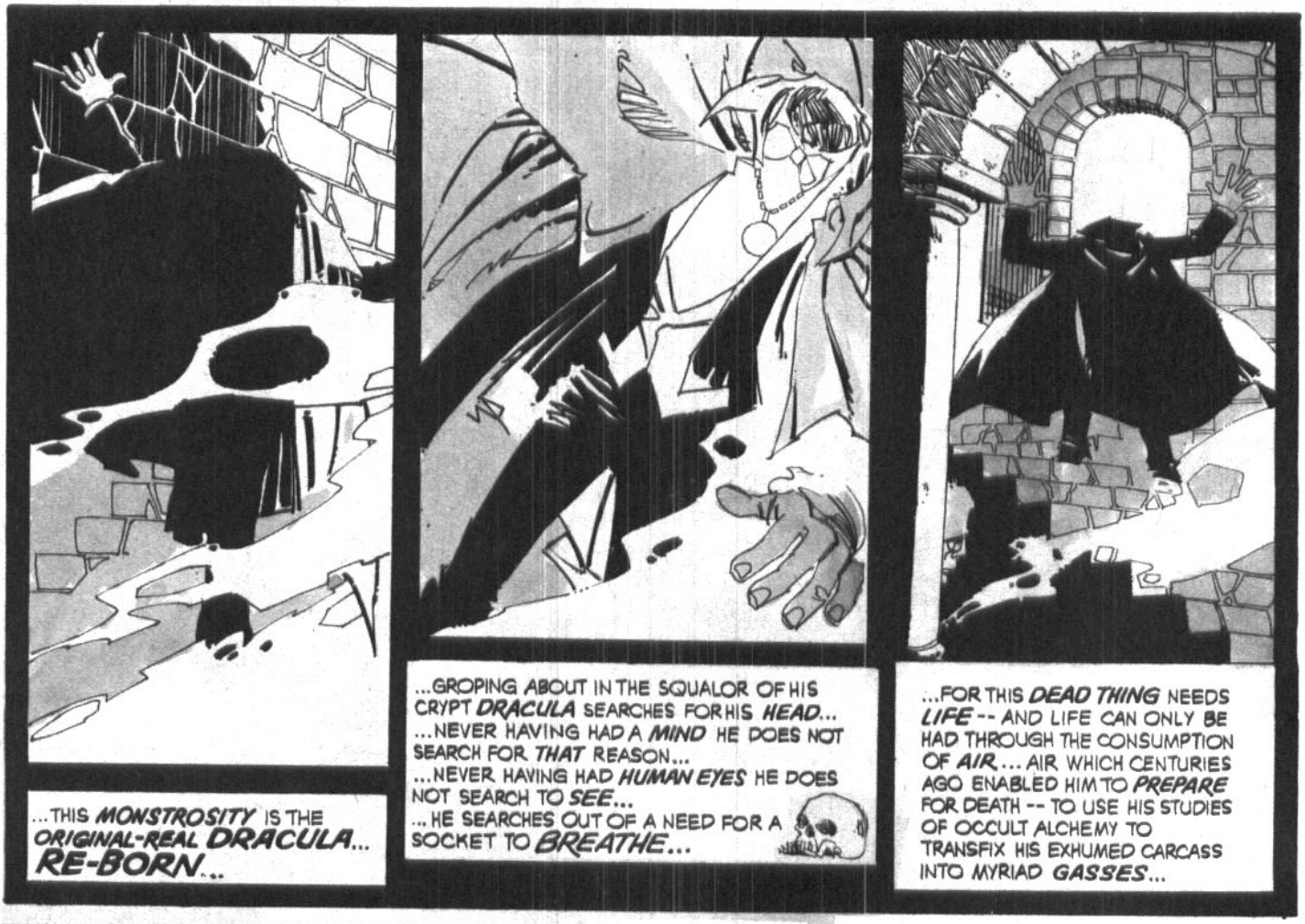


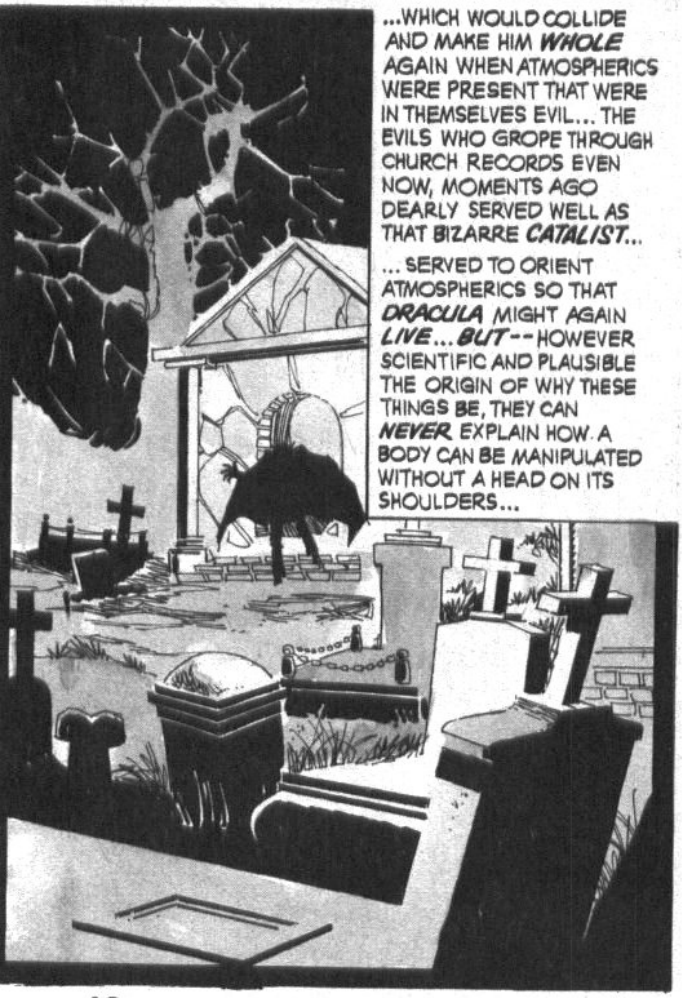
...IT TOOK THEM HOURS AFTER DOCKING TO FIND THE TOMB -- THE PAPERS WERE DECIPHERED EASILY AND THEY WERE EXACT -- THEY STOOD AT THE BARRED GATE OF THE TOMB ITSELF WITHIN THAT GRAVEYARD AND KNELT... FOR THEY WERE FILLED WITH RESPECT IN THE PRESENCE OF THE MAN WHO WAS THE ORIGINAL REAL-LIFE DRACULA... FOR EVEN THO HE'D BEEN DEAD AND BURIED FOR CENTURIES, EVEN IN THE PRESENCE OF CORPSE DUST THEY WERE IN EXTRA-AWE...
...SO THEY KNELT AND PRAYED...
...TO SATAN...


...IN AMUSEMENT THEY ENTERED THE CHURCH THAT ADJOINED THAT MAD GALLERY... ENTERED AND WERE ASTONISHED WHEN A LEATHERY, WEARY OLD PRIEST SHOWED THEM CHURCH RECORDS AND PAPERS...


...DETAILS THAT LED TO THE DISCOVERY OF AN AWFUL FACT...
...PRIEST... THESE PAPERS SAY THAT DRACULA WAS BEHEADED BEFORE BURIAL...
YES CHILD
VLAD THE IMPALER DIED OF NATURAL CAUSES IN HIS OWN BED... BUT EVEN AFTER DEATH THE SUPERSTITIOUS LOCALS FEARED HIM -- THEY FELT THEY NEEDED PROTECTION FROM THIS MOST CURSED OF ALL VAMPIRES... AND SO WITH TRADITIONAL CEREMONY HE WAS DECAPITATED BEFORE PLACED IN HIS TOMB...

...IN THE TOMB... GASSES IN THE AIR SHUDDER... COLLIDE... THE CRUMBLING FETID ATMOSPHERE FILTERS IN TO WHERE THE BODY OF DRACULA LIES YET IN STATE...
...THEY COLLECT INTO A HORRID SOLID... BEGIN TO BEND INTO BONES... MOLD... FORM...
...AND THE CORRUPT MACABRE CONCLUSION OF THIS SAD, NOXIOUS IMPLOSION STANDS ERECT AND BARBARIC IN IMPLICATION...
...FOR THIS THING IS THE FILTHIEST THING EVER BORN EVEN IN ITS OWN TIME... AND NOW, IN OUR TIME... NO MAN ON EARTH CAN DESCRIBE ITS ULTIMATE CORRUPTION...


...THIS MONSTROSITY IS THE ORIGINAL-REAL DRACULA... RE-BORN...
...GROPING ABOUT IN THE SQUALOR OF HIS CRYPT DRACULA SEARCHES FOR HIS HEAD... ...NEVER HAVING HAD A MIND HE DOES NOT SEARCH FOR THAT REASON... ...NEVER HAVING HAD HUMAN EYES HE DOES NOT SEARCH TO SEE... ...HE SEARCHES OUT OF A NEED FOR A SOCKET TO BREATHE...
...FOR THIS DEAD THING NEEDS LIFE -- AND LIFE CAN ONLY BE HAD THROUGH THE CONSUMPTION OF AIR... AIR WHICH CENTURIES AGO ENABLED HIM TO PREPARE FOR DEATH -- TO USE HIS STUDIES OF OCCULT ALCHEMY TO TRANSFIX HIS EXHUMED CARCASS INTO MYRIAD GASSES...


...WHICH WOULD COLLIDE AND MAKE HIM WHOLE AGAIN WHEN ATMOSPHERICS WERE PRESENT THAT WERE IN THEMSELVES EVIL... THE EVILS WHO GROPE THROUGH CHURCH RECORDS EVEN NOW, MOMENTS AGO DEARLY SERVED WELL AS THAT BIZARRE CATALIST...
... SERVED TO ORIENT ATMOSPHERICS SO THAT DRACULA MIGHT AGAIN LIVE... BUT -- HOWEVER SCIENTIFIC AND PLAUSIBLE THE ORIGIN OF WHY THESE THINGS BE, THEY CAN NEVER EXPLAIN HOW A BODY CAN BE MANIPULATED WITHOUT A HEAD ON ITS SHOULDERS...

...WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY CHURCH?...
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
...YOU PRACTICE DEVIL CALLING IN MY CHURCH?
... OH GOD... GOD ABOVE...
...NO...
DEFILING IT... WHAT BETTER PLACE ON EARTH TO CALL UP THE SERVANT OF OUR MASTER... THE LESSER LUCIFUGE...
YES
...UGGGGGGGHHH...

OH GRAND LUCIFUGE
... MASTER OF INCARNATE EVIL... FATHER OF ALL THAT IS UNHOLY...
...WE CALL UPON THY SERVANT... WHO THO LESSER THAN THEE IS MORE CORRUPT THAN CORRUPTION ITSELF...
...OH LESSER LUCIFUGE... COME TO GIVE THY DEVOTED ONES THE PRIVILAGE OF THY VILE PRESENCE...
...COME OH SERVANT OF THE MASTER... COME INTO THIS HOLY PLACE AND SPOIL IT... COME OH MEANINGLESS ENTITY... COME AND WITNESS THE SACRILAGE OF THY SERVANTS IN THIS CHURCH OF GOD...
YOU HAVE DONE WELL TO SELECT THIS PLACE AS YOUR ALTAR...
... SATHANAS FINDS MUCH AMUSEMENT IN IT... HE IS PLEASED... AND PERMITS YOU TO MOUTH OF THE DESIRE WHICH NOW GLUTS YOUR TROUBLED MINDS...
...WE HAVE NEED OF THE MASTER'S ALL-SEEING ATROCIOUS EYES... WE NEED TO KNOW WHERE IS KEPT IN THIS WORLD THE SKULL REMAINS OF THE LONG DEAD VAMPIRE WHO DWELLS IN THE CRYPT NEATH THE ADJOINING GRAVEYARD...
...YOU MAY QUIT THIS SEARCH ...IT IS WITHOUT POINT... FOR THE HEAD IS WITHIN THIS GOD-GUARDED RELIGIOUS MAUSOLIUM ...IN THE CHURCH'S VAULT-SAFE BELOW OUR VERY FEET...
...OUTSIDE A MAN-MACABRE IS DRAWN BY DEMONIC ATMOSPHERICS TO THE DOOR OF THE CHURCH... DRAWN TO WALK STRAIGHT ALTHOUGH HIS FOOTSTEPS ARE BLIND...
...INSIDE THE CULTISTS RIP APART ANCIENT LOCKS... TEAR AT ARCHAIC BARS... CLUTCH AND LEER AT THE TREASURE LOCKED THEREIN... DRACULA'S NOXIOUS SKULL...
...AND INSIDE, DRAWN BY EMOTIONAL-INSTINCT THE OWNER OF THAT CRUMBLING THING MOVES INEXORABLY TOWARDS IT... SHUNTING THRU THE HALLS... STUMBLING WITH EACH PROFOUND CRACK IN THE OLD STONE FLOOR... BUT DRAWN WITHOUT RECOURSE...

...HE ENTERS...
...HE GROPES TILL THE HEAD IS GIVEN, SILENTLY, SHOCKINGLY!..
...AND WHEN IT IS PLACED BY TREMBLING HANDS IN ITS SOCKET THERE UTTERS AN AWFUL-PAINFUL-SHRIEKING SCREAM
EEAAAGOD GODAAAAA
...THE PAIN...
...HE MUST BE IN AGONY...
...THE PAIN...
...FOR THE SAKE OF... OF...
...OF... OH SATAN HELP HIM HELP HIM...
THE PAIN!
SATAN--GOD--LET ME BE RELEASED--LET ME DIE--I CANNOT... TAKE THE PAIN...
...THIS...HEAD IS NOT MINE... THE PRIESTS HAVE PLAYED A JOKE...
...I WEAR THE SKULL OF AN APE...

HEAR ME ENTITY...
...EITHER ENTITY... ANY ENTITY...
ANY DEITY...
RELEASE ME... I CANNOT ENDURE THE PAIN...
...BUT WHAT HAPPENED?... YOUR HEAD IS NOW WHOLE...
...THAT IS MY STORY NOSFERATU... THAT IS MY TALE...
BECAUSE IT IS NOT MINE... IT IS BUT A MASK LIKE THE OTHERS IN THIS ROOM...
...UNDERNEATH ARE FEATURES THAT ARE NOT OF THE ONE YOU SUMMONED... FOR I AM, LIKE DRACULA NOW, MERELY A SERVANT OF THE MASTER SATAN... COME AT HIS ORDERS TO TELL YOU WHY YOUR SCHEDULED GUEST COULD NOT COME TONIGHT...
...YOUR SCHEDULED GUEST IS IN HELL... HE WILL NOT LEAVE...
...EVER AGAIN...
...FOR ANY PURPOSE...
...THERE ARE MANY DRACULAS IN THIS WORLD... ALL UNREAL... NOW YOU KNOW THEY ARE ALL UNREAL... FOR THE ONLY REAL DRACULA IS DEFINATELY DEAD..
...HE CANNOT BE RESURRECTED... ONLY MERE SERVANTS AND DESCENDANTS AND WOULD-BE DRACULAS FROM MACABRE FOREIGN OTHER-PLANETS REMAIN IN THIS EARTH-PLACE HABITAT...
...WHEN NEXT WE RETURN TO THIS SHALLOW ISLAND -- (WHERE NOW AS WE CLOSE EVEN NOSFERATU IS QUIETED IN SULLEN ASTONISHMENT) -- WE WILL UNMASK ANOTHER...
...BE HERE...

. . . **THE SKELETONS IN THE DESERT** were awfully degenerated when I came to this place. The flesh was vanished and the bone was a filthy yellow. The blood that soaked the shredded clothes and which covered the sand was the only richness about the diseased colors of those awkward remains. The ruins of the macabre city overhead shaded everything into grotesque grey, and the fetid sun cutting through adobe cracks so burned certain of the bones that they crumbled at my touch. This foul dead place is as ancient as age, and as brutal in death today as it was in life yesterday when someone **BURIED IT** . . . someone whose name is forgotten and whose reasons are obscure . . . and . . . better forgotten too . . .

. . . and so starts my tale . . .

THE SKELETON IN THE DESERT

. . . by Archaic AL HEWETSON
and illustrated by Macabre MAELO CINTRON

. . . I am WALTER SCOTIA, come to this place to dig up out of its filthy vaults packets of gold left alone and unknown many centuries since this hell-hole's corruption and demise. Certain documents came to my attention as curator of such odd artifacts at a small, mid-western university, where they were first regarded as curiosities and discussed in my lectures. Three of my students elected to take these reports of a hidden city in this dead desert seriously, and preceded my own visit by a few days. It was at their dogged persistence by telegraph wire that I decided to follow them here, where I found only their sad skeletons lying bleached yellow and horribly half-buried in the blowing filthy sands . . . remains that **NOW WARNED ME** to return to the security of the mid-west's sheltered old streets before it was too late! Here I was however, and here was a discovery I was confident justified the risk of my life . . . for on this tiny globe to find an old place now exposed to fickle desert winds would make newspaper headlines and topical discussion . . . so did I justify my original thoughts as I decided to stay after my terrible discovery of the wretched skeletons of my poor students . . .

. . . so my thoughts were **ORIGINALLY**, but as I began to ***DIG*** and find the private **GOLD BANKS** of this city, I seemed to become angry at the probable future of these riches! I realized that **POSSESSION** of such gold would be by government and beaurocracy, and I'd personally, probably, be left with only momentary public acclaim which would soon wane and leave me once again a poorly-paid academic, struggling to keep ahead of even small day-to-day living expenses . . . and so, so **obsessed** did I become, regard for anthropological interest soon became secondary to a singular and dreadful **LUST** which totally overcame me and dictated my motives here . . .

. . . in retrospect I am **ASHAMED** of such an out-of-character self-ness, and I can hardly criticize the **FATES** for permitting the **MADNESS** that did happen on the **3rd DAY** . . . the 3rd day when the earth **HEAVED** and **HELL** came up to claim my rotted and evil soul . . . I cannot blame fate and I cannot blame God . . . for I invited all that happened, and my regrets and present self-pity are doomed to remain my eternal mindless exercise . . .

. . . in this city of ruins there is much that is blockaded by ancient sand, which I was forced to scrape and move in my lunatic efforts to uncover the golden treasures that lay there-under . . . as I uncovered a large and deep tomb-like vault I presumed was a **BANK** of sorts, I was momentarily astounded and fear-struck by the great rush of wind which seemed to come out of a cracked adobe-cemented wall. The wind was . . . a . . . a ghastly **HOWL** which was at once fierce and frightening, principally because it came out of **NOWHERE** and tore about my ears with such sudden and violent ferocity that I was practically knocked down upon my knees (where, in improbable retrospect, I should have remained, clasped my hands in earnest prayer, and pleaded with God for deliverance!). I looked up and around, grabbing with my hands at sand-covered-stone-shelves which collapsed at my frantic and hopeless mad clutches . . . but realizing the total vagueness of the wind's origin I was bound up more in **CURIOSITY** than in **FEAR** . . .

. . . it seemed as if all **HELL** was conspiring with **NATURE** to collide with my intellect, so irrational was the sound and the fury that came without apparent cause or end . . .

. . . in a moment I expected it to all die as all things die, but of course it could not die . . . it was a **FETUS** . . . a re-birth of a **thing** within that wall of **ludicrous implication.** I began to shake and my nervous agitation shattered me and choked my blood within my paralized veins . . . the fury would not stop, not slow . . . indeed, it seemed to become more and more furious 'till I thought the **SKY** was going to **CRACK** and suck me up . . . I thought these illegal thoughts an unimaginable long time . . . and when the wind assumed a physical shape I was **RELIEVED** from this frustration of **SUSPENDED TIME,** tho I knew well what I now faced was greater than what had been, and more awful and degenerate than **ANYTHING** I could **ever** understand or endure . . .

. . . I knew in an instant what had befallen my students . . .

. . . the **THING** that formed out of air and fury had wings and was black; it had a face that was **GHOULISH** and claws that ruined the air itself; its manner and style was that of a **VULTURE** exactly . . . one bred out of horror and some insane magician's humor in another century in this dead city . . .

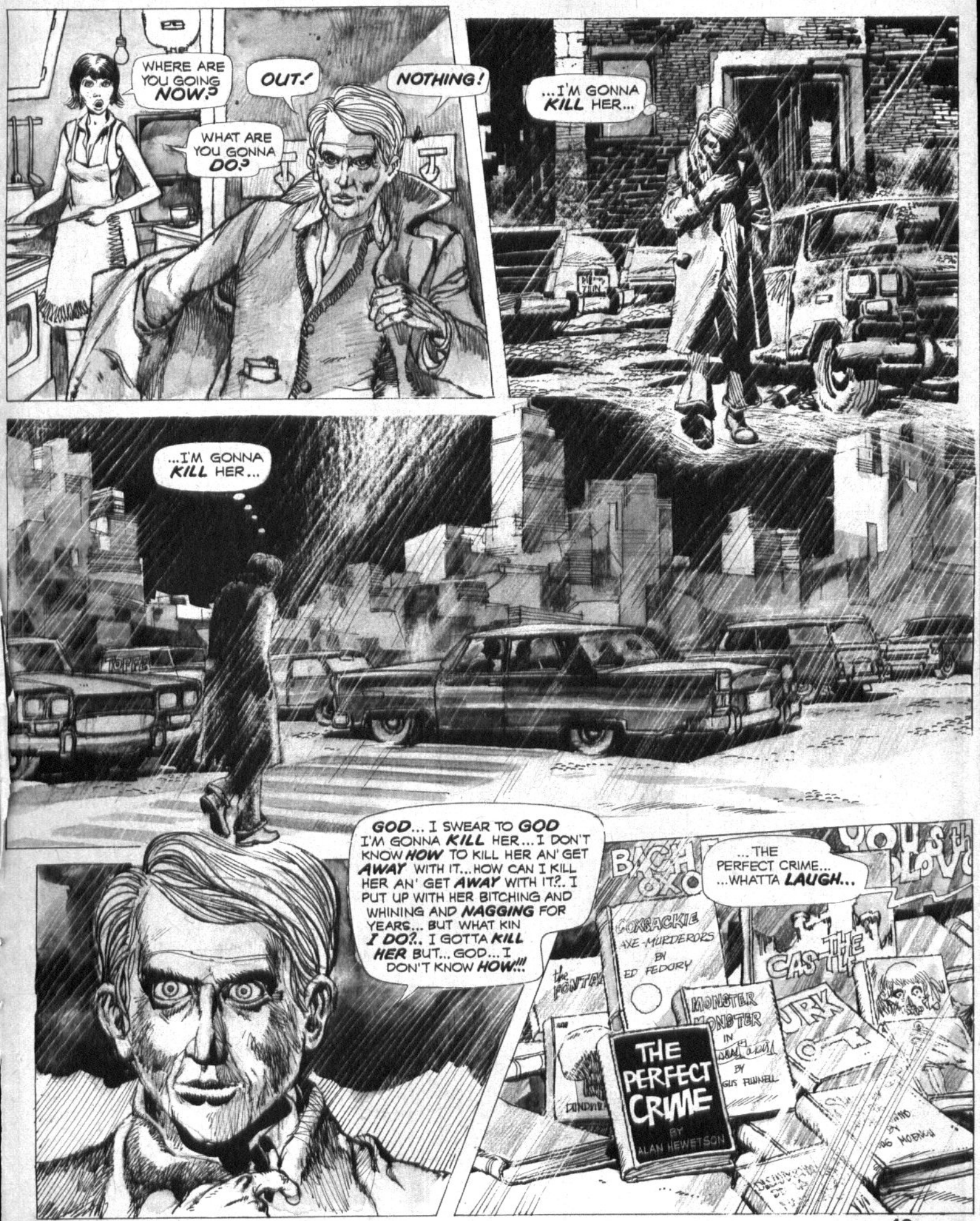
. . . the **THING** that was a **VULTURE** took up to the sky for a breath of air and an exercise of its wings, and it dropped on me and imbedded its impassionate claws into my **HEAD** . . . if lifted me from the ground and dragged me through the air at such tremendous speed I stopped breathing . . . then it dropped me into the earth-sand and hovered above me shaking and **LAUGHING** . . . it descended upon me again and affixed its claws to my **CHEST** which it picked with its hawk-beak 'till I was exposed and **DEAD . . .**

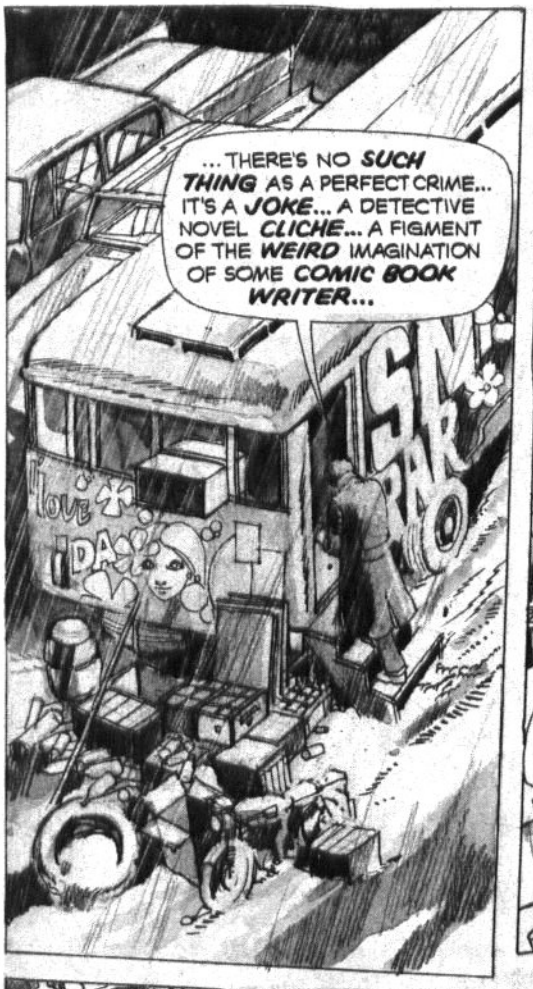
. . . it removed from within me my heart which it devoured . . . and it removed certain intestines and such veins as were solid, and it consumed them in-total . . . it stripped off my flesh and sucked out my blood and spat out clots it did not enjoy onto the drenched sand-surround . . . I felt it all from start 'till finish and it was inconceivable agony, terribly wretched and depraved agony . . . I went mad when I first fell to the sand — and when I saw the thing's eyes that were only holes and only obscene blackness and blindness . . .

. . . the end came when the vulture left me and returned to its sand-vaulted crypt. The sun which had waited till the vulture had finished, now is coming down upon me and drying what is left, flaking off my skeletal whiteness and making me jaundiced in color, and making me as I found my students, horrible and empty skeletal shells . . .

. . . I am . . . the skeleton in the desert . . .

HARRY WHY DON'T YOU TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE LIKE I TOL' YA?
...YEH...
...OH GOD... HERE WE GO AGAIN...
HARRY WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I'M GOING TO TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE HONEY JUS' LIKE YOU TOL' ME...
DON'T HONEY ME YOU CREEP... WHAT ABOUT THE DISHES? ...HAH? I JUST TOL' YA TO DO THE DISHES AN' THEN TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING NOW?
I'M DRYING THE DISHES ALREADY... WHAT'S-A-MATTER NOW?
WITH THAT CLOTH YOU'RE DRYING THOSE DISHES? THAT'S A CLOTH MY MOTHER GAVE ME AN' YOU'RE DRYING THE DISHES WITH IT? IT'S A CLOTH FOR DECORATION!
...THIS IS A PROLOGUE... ONE THAT LASTS SEVERAL YEARS...
ARE YOU GONNA TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE NOW?
GIMME A MINUTE TO DRY MY HANDS WILL YA? I JUST FINISHED DOING THE DISHES!
SO WHADDYA WANT?... A MEDAL?
... I'M GONNA KILL HER...


WHERE ARE YOU GOING NOW?
OUT!
NOTHING!
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?
...I'M GONNA KILL HER...
...I'M GONNA KILL HER...
GOD... I SWEAR TO GOD I'M GONNA KILL HER... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO KILL HER AN' GET AWAY WITH IT... HOW CAN I KILL HER AN' GET AWAY WITH IT?.. I PUT UP WITH HER BITCHING AND WHINING AND NAGGING FOR YEARS... BUT WHAT KIN I DO?.. I GOTTA KILL HER BUT... GOD... I DON'T KNOW HOW!!!
...THE PERFECT CRIME... ...WHATTA LAUGH...
COXSACKIE AXE-MURDERORS BY ED FEDORY
MONSTER MONSTER IN
THE PERFECT CRIME BY ALAN HEWETSON


...THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A PERFECT CRIME... IT'S A JOKE... A DETECTIVE NOVEL CLICHE... A FIGMENT OF THE WEIRD IMAGINATION OF SOME COMIC BOOK WRITER...

...STILL...
...JUST MAYBE...
...I'M USED TO DREAMING UP HIGHLY ORGANIZED ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS ON MADISON AVENUE... I SHOULD BE ABLE TO THINK UP SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS A WAY TO GET RID OF MY WIFE...
...IT JUST MIGHT BE POSSIBLE...

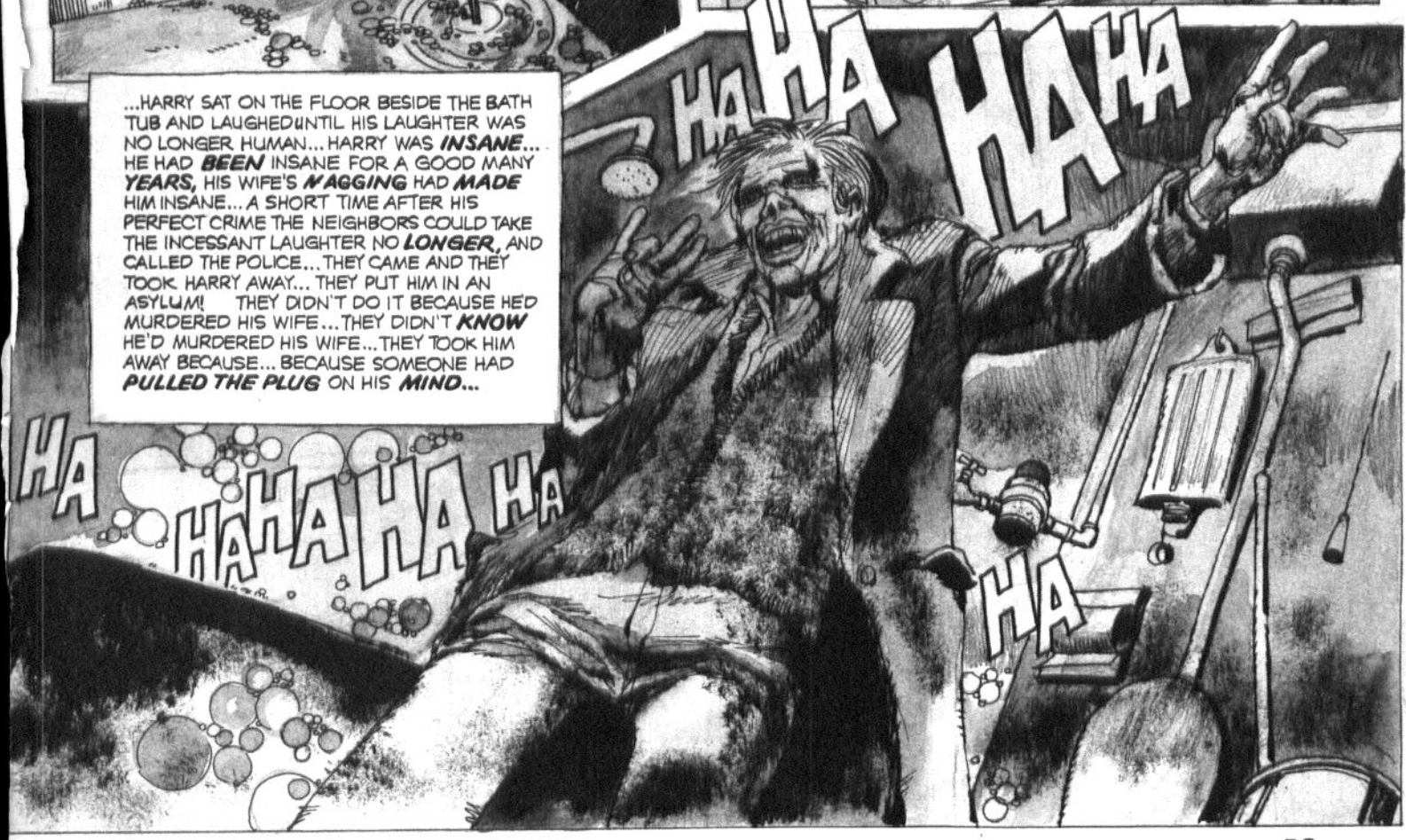
...AND SO ENDS OUR RATHER LONG PROLOGUE...AND HERE STARTS OUR TALE...

THE TALE OF THE PERFECT CRIME

GUS
...HEH! HEH! HEH...
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN YOU BUM? DO YOU KNOW IT'S FOUR O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING? DON'T YOU KNOW IT'S DANGEROUS WALKING AROUND IN NEW YORK AT FOUR O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING STUPID?..
WHY DON'T YOU JUST... SHUT-UP!
MMMARE YOU... MMPH... MAD...
JUST SHUT-UP.
...UGGLGGHL...
RAT POISON

...HEH HEH...
ACID

...HARRY SAT ON THE FLOOR BESIDE THE BATH TUB AND LAUGHED UNTIL HIS LAUGHTER WAS NO LONGER HUMAN... HARRY WAS ***INSANE***... HE HAD ***BEEN*** INSANE FOR A GOOD MANY ***YEARS,*** HIS WIFE'S ***NAGGING*** HAD ***MADE*** HIM INSANE... A SHORT TIME AFTER HIS PERFECT CRIME THE NEIGHBORS COULD TAKE THE INCESSANT LAUGHTER NO ***LONGER,*** AND CALLED THE POLICE... THEY CAME AND THEY TOOK HARRY AWAY... THEY PUT HIM IN AN ASYLUM! THEY DIDN'T DO IT BECAUSE HE'D MURDERED HIS WIFE... THEY DIDN'T ***KNOW*** HE'D MURDERED HIS WIFE... THEY TOOK HIM AWAY BECAUSE... BECAUSE SOMEONE HAD ***PULLED THE PLUG*** ON HIS ***MIND***...



DO YOU REALLY THINK WE SHOULD DO THIS, DOCTOR?
YES...WE DON'T HAVE ANY ALTERNATIVE, JARVIN. THIS GUY IS SETTING THINGS BACK 20 YEARS...
...WE HAD TO COME OUT OF RETIREMENT TO STOP HIM...

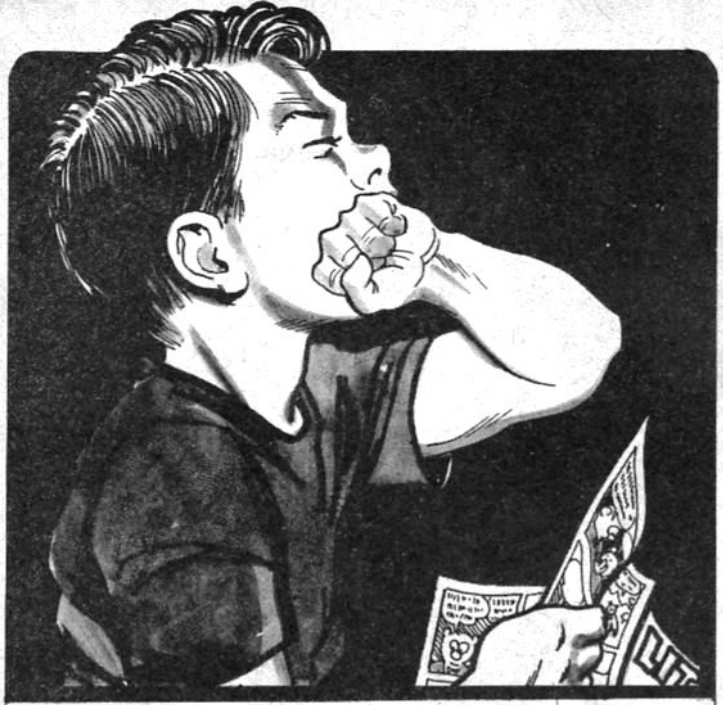
YES...THIS GUY IS INFECTING YOUNG MINDS WITH ALL THIS HORROR STUFF. WE DIDN'T WORK TO HAVE CENSORSHIP IMPOSED JUST SO HE COULD COME ALONG AND IGNORE IT...
...YOU SEE THE STUFF HE'S PUTTING OUT? IT'S WRETCHED ...MAKES SOME OF THE THINGS WE OBJECTED TO IN THE 50'S LOOK TAME!

HE'LL SEE YOU NOW, SIR...
I HEAR HE'S GOT THIS WEIRD PHILOSOPHY ABOUT HORROR...HE FIGURES IF HE'S PRODUCING A HORROR MAGAZINE IT SHOULD BE HORROR!
WELL...THAT'S NOT ACCEPTABLE... WHY DOESN'T HE PUT FANTASY AND SWORD AND SORCERY AND SCIENCE-FICTION IN HIS MAGAZINES?

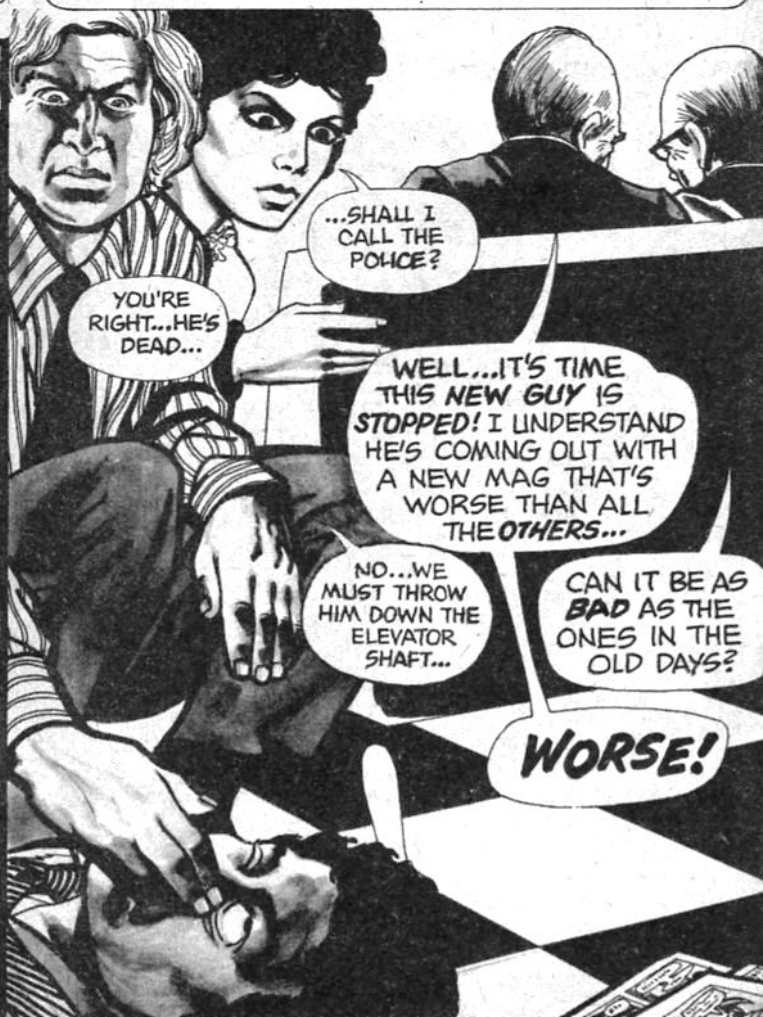
...HE'S GOT TO BE STOPPED...
...WE MUST STOP HIM, JARVIN ... HE CAN'T CONTINUE TO WORK OUTSIDE OUR CENSORSHIP-SEAL...WRITING ALL THOSE HORRIBLE WRETCHED STORIES TO CORRUPT YOUNG MINDS...
...HE'S GOT TO BE STOPPED...

THE COMICS MAGABRE

"...REMEMBER THE ***FUSS*** I CAUSED IN THOSE DAYS WHEN I WROTE ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT HOW COMICS WERE ***DISTURBING*** YOUNG MINDS AND INCITING ***CRIMES***... PARENTS RIPPED THEIR KID'S COMICS AND *ORDERED* THEM TO STOP READING THEM AND PAY ATTENTION TO ***MORE IMPORTANT*** THINGS LIKE ***TELEVISION***..."



"...YES, I REMEMBER THAT, DOCTOR... DO ***YOU*** REMEMBER HOW I SET UP THE CENSORSHIP BUREAU... FORCING ALL THE HORROR COMICS ***OUT OF BUSINESS*** AND FORCING PUBLISHERS TO CONFORM TO MY REGULATIONS... REMEMBER THE BEAUTIFUL COMICS THEY BEGAN TO MAKE AFTER THAT?... THERE WAS ***"LITTLE DODO"***... ***"UNCLE ROOB"*** AND ***"ELMO, THE ELEPHANT"***... COMICS THAT KIDS ***SHOULD*** READ..."


...SHALL I CALL THE POLICE?
YOU'RE RIGHT... HE'S DEAD...
WELL... IT'S TIME THIS NEW GUY IS STOPPED! I UNDERSTAND HE'S COMING OUT WITH A NEW MAG THAT'S WORSE THAN ALL THE OTHERS...
NO... WE MUST THROW HIM DOWN THE ELEVATOR SHAFT...
CAN IT BE AS BAD AS THE ONES IN THE OLD DAYS?
WORSE!

"...REMEMBER THAT STORY WHERE THE GUY FED HIS WIFE INTO A GARBAGE DISPOSAL UNIT AND WHEN HE TURNED ON THE SINK FAUCET HER BLOOD CAME POURING OUT...;CHOKE;...HORRIBLE..."

PSYCHO
...THOSE DAYS SHOULD BE LONG PASSED...
BUT THEY AREN'T...THIS NEW GUY IS DOING STUFF THAT'S EVEN WORSE...
THROW HIM DOWN THE ELEVATOR SHAFT, EGOR.
ARG...

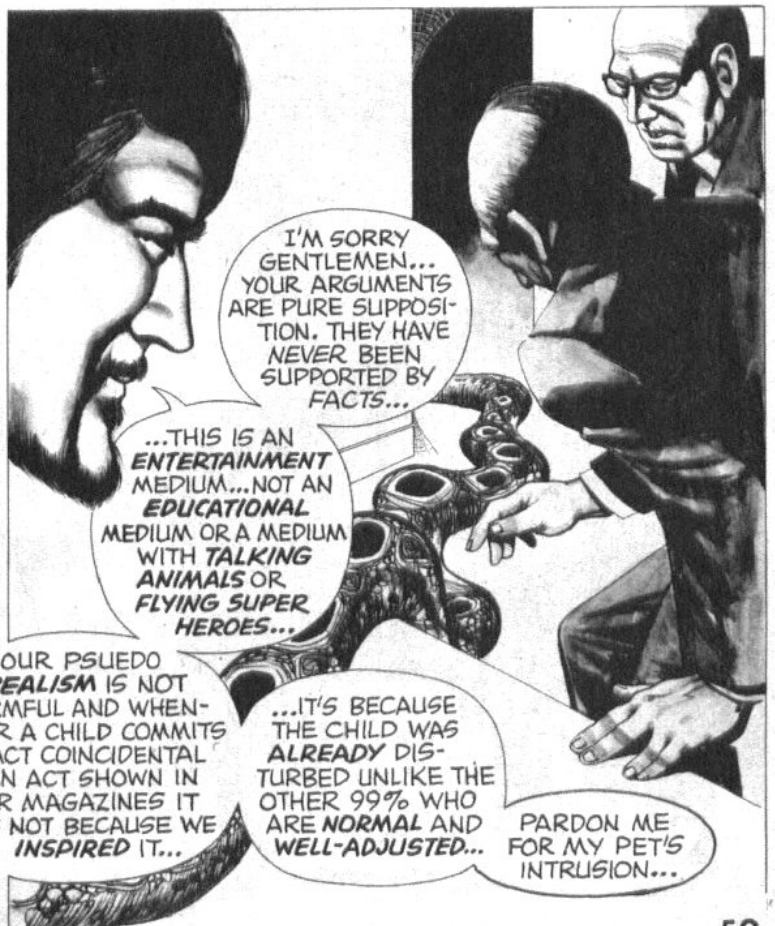
"...DID YOU SEE THAT STORY WHERE A BUNCH OF CRIMINAL LUNATICS JUMP ON THE HANDS OF A CRIPPLED MAN, FORCING HIM TO FALL 300 FEET ONTO HARD CEMENT WHICH REDUCED HIM TO A BLOODY PULP...DISGUSTING..."

HE WILL SEE YOU NOW GENTLEMEN...
WHAT WAS THAT SCREAM EGOR?
ARG...HE WASN'T DEAD... HE WUZ ONLY ASLEEP...
BUT HE'S DEAD NOW.
...WE'LL PUT A STOP TO HIM BEFORE HE STARTS THIS ALL OVER AGAIN...
...I HEARD HE'S A VERY UNREASONABLE PERSON...HE MAY NOT

...GLAD TO MEET YOU, GENTLEMEN... HAVVA SEAT...
WE CAME TO TALK ABOUT THE HORROR AND THE VIOLENCE!
WHAT ABOUT IT?
IT'S GOT TO STOP!
SOME OF THE STORIES ARE DE-GENERATE!
WHY... THANK YOU, GENTLEMEN!
THAT WASN'T MEANT AS A COMPLIMENT...WE'RE HERE TO INSIST YOU CONFORM TO WHAT THE OTHER MAGAZINES PUBLISH!

"...LIKE THAT STORY YOU DID ABOUT THE PAINTING THAT CAME ALIVE AND ATTACKED THE MAN... THAT WAS HORRIBLE...

WELL...I'VE STUDIED THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE ON OUR READERS AND THERE IS NOT THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THIS KIND OF FANTASY VIOLENCE IS HARMLESS...
WHAT IS BAD IS THE 7 O'CLOCK NEWS...NOW THAT'S HORROR!


I'M SORRY GENTLEMEN... YOUR ARGUMENTS ARE PURE SUPPOSITION. THEY HAVE NEVER BEEN SUPPORTED BY FACTS...
...THIS IS AN ENTERTAINMENT MEDIUM...NOT AN EDUCATIONAL MEDIUM OR A MEDIUM WITH TALKING ANIMALS OR FLYING SUPER HEROES...
OUR PSUEDO REALISM IS NOT HARMFUL AND WHENEVER A CHILD COMMITS AN ACT COINCIDENTAL TO AN ACT SHOWN IN OUR MAGAZINES IT IS NOT BECAUSE WE INSPIRED IT...
...IT'S BECAUSE THE CHILD WAS ALREADY DISTURBED UNLIKE THE OTHER 99% WHO ARE NORMAL AND WELL-ADJUSTED...
PARDON ME FOR MY PET'S INTRUSION...

YOU'VE GOT TO STOP WRITING THAT STUFF!
WELL THAT'S NOT A GOOD ANSWER !!!
YOU DIDN'T HEAR A WORD I SAID... DID YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? HAVE YOU GONE MAD?
YOU'VE GOT TO STOP IT!!
...STOP INFECTING OUR CHILDREN'S MINDS...
DIE MONSTER!
DIE!
OHMYGODAAAUGH!!
...THEY KILLED HIM...
...THEY KILLED HIM... WHY DID THEY DO IT?
WHERE ARE THOSE LITTLE VOICES COMING FROM?
IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN...
WE CAN'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN!

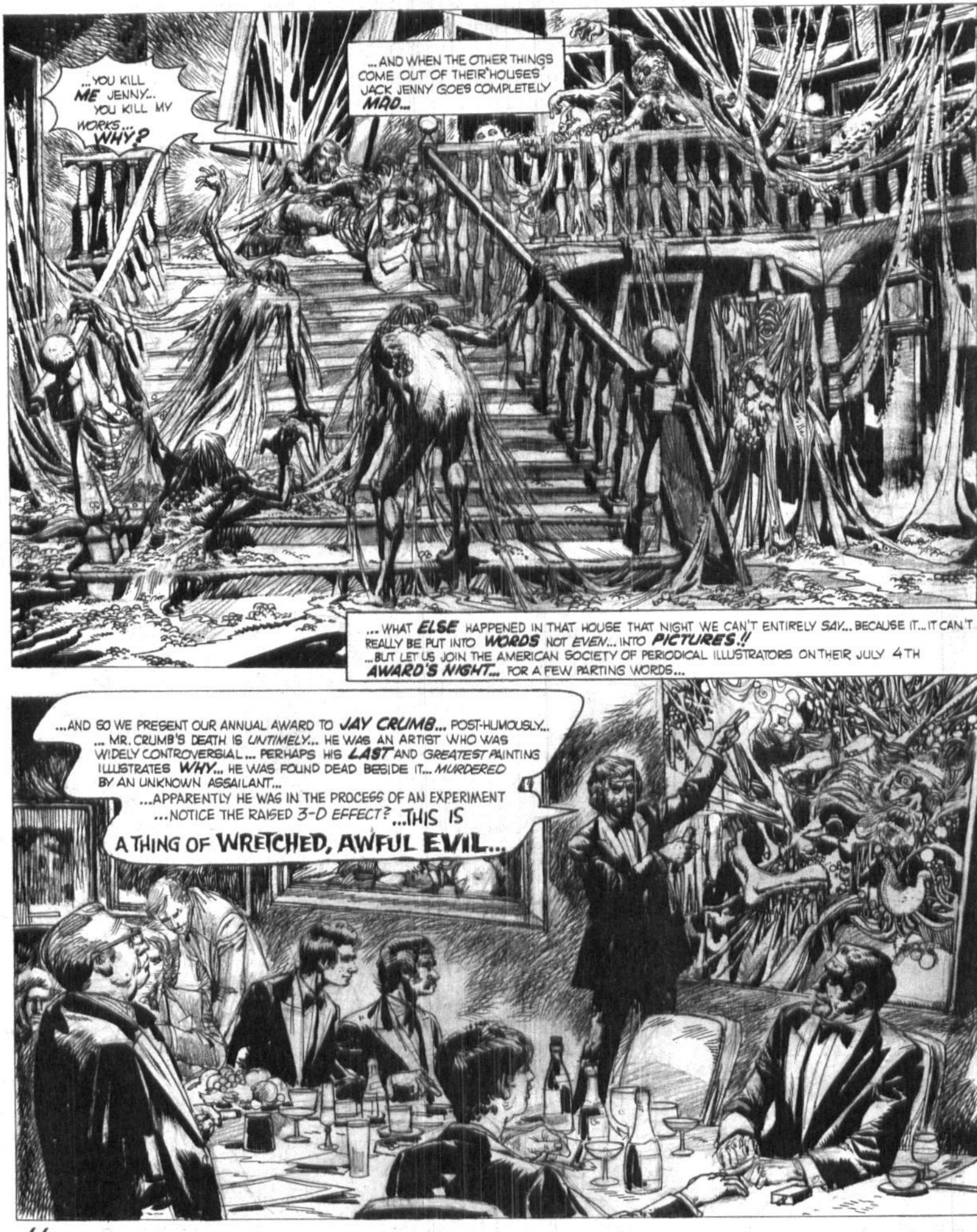
...YOU KILLED US 20 YEARS AGO...WE WON'T LET YOU KILL US AGAIN...
...GOTTA CLEANSE THE WORLD OF THE LIKES OF YOU!
YOU KILLED US...BUT YOU DIDN'T BURY US...
BUT WE WILL BURY YOU...
YOU ARE THE MONSTERS... NOT US...
YOU KILLED OUR MASTER. NOW...WE WILL KILL YOU...
...YOU THINK THE READERS DON'T KNOW A GOOD HORROR STORY?
DIE...

...IT WILL SHORTLY BE JULY THE 4TH, THE NIGHT OF THE GREAT PRESENTATION BY THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PERIODICAL ILLUSTRATORS... WHEN THIS SCENE TAKES PLACE HOWEVER, IT IS SOMETIME SHORTLY BEFORE THAT AUGUST EVENT... ON THIS NIGHT THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS GROUP AROUND THEIR EXECUTIVE TABLE AND ARGUE OVER THE RECIPIENT OF THIS YEAR'S 'BEST ILLUSTRATOR' AWARD...
...SHOULD IT GO TO JERRY TOUTAIN?... WHOSE EXCELLENCE NO-ONE ARGUES...
...OR TO JAY CRUMB?... THE WEIRD AND DISTURBED ARTIST WHOSE WORK HAS TAKEN THE COUNTRY'S YOUTH AND STRUNG 'EM RIGHT OUT...
...3 MEN ARE THE FINAL CONTENDERS IN THIS MAD CONTEST... YET THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK OR EVEN BE PRESENT... THEY ARE ONLY 3RD PERSON SINGULARS AS THESE JUDGES DECIDE WHETHER TO SELECT:... THE EXCELLENCE OF JERRY TOUTAIN... THE PROCLIVITY OF DEL ROSA... OR...
...OR PERHAPS TO DEL ROSA?... THE SINGULAR ARTIST WHOSE WORK GRACED THE COVER OF TIME ON 5 OCCASIONS THIS YEAR ...
...THE STRANGE PAINTINGS OF JAY CRUMB...

NO... NO... NO!...
NO... NO... NO... NO...
OH COME ON JACK... WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM... WHY DO YOU INSIST ON REJECTING WHAT SHOULD BE A UNANIMOUS VOTE FOR CRUMB?
LOOK AT THIS STUFF... ...THIS IS ART?... ...ART?... ...HE'S WEIRO... MAD... WE CAN'T GIVE OUR MOST PRIZED AWARD TO A LUNATIC LIKE CRUMB...
YOU'RE JUST SORE JACK JENNY... SORE BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T GET IT LAST YEAR... ...OUR MINDS ARE MADE-UP... CRUMB IS TO BE THIS YEAR'S WINNER...
AW C'MON JACK...
... GO TO HELL...
LET HIM GO... HE'S SORE LOSER... CRUMB IS OBVIOUSLY THE MOST SUITABLE ARTIST... ...LET'S TELEPHONE HIM THE GOOD NEWS...
... SO FAR... IT WOULD SEEM... THERE IS NOTHING... AH... OUT OF THE ORDINARY GOING ON HERE IN THIS STORY... JUST A SIMPLE ARGUMENT AND INTRODUCTION OF CHARACTERS... DOESN'T SEEM LIKE TOO MUCH FOUNDATION FOR A TALE OF THE MACABRE DOES IT?... PERHAPS AS WE JOIN THE BROODING JACK JENNY, THE NATURE OF OUR TALE WILL SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGE... THE HORROR WILL BEGIN TO COMPOUND... AND CERTAIN MAD REALIZATIONS WILL SLOWLY AND HORRIBLY BEGIN TO STRIKE US... FOR THIS... IS THE ODD INTRODUCTION TO CERTAIN SCENES OF TOTAL UNBRIDLED HORROR TO FOLLOW...
JAY?...
...CONGRATULATIONS... WE MET TONIGHT AND SELECTED YOU AS THE LUCKY GUY...
...GREAT... ... HEY THAT'S REALLY FINE... I CAN'T SAY I DON'T DESERVE IT... CAUSE I DO...
C'MON 'ROUND FOR A DRINK...
NOT TONIGHT... THANKS ANYWAY... I GOTTA HIT THE SACK... I BEEN WORKIN' ABOUT 20 HOURS STRAIGHT... ...I'LL DROP IN TOMORROW IN THE AFTERNOON...

...JACK JENNY IS SITTING ON A PARK BENCH OPPOSITE JAY CRUMB'S HOUSE... IN HIS MIND HE HATES... DESPISES...
...THIS CRUMB... ...IS RIDICULOUS... ...HE CAN'T EVEN LEGITIMATELY PAINT! HE'S MAD... PERVERTED...
...I MAY NOT HAVE HIS DEPRAVED MIND BUT AT LEAST I CAN PAINT... ...AT LEAST I UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN ANATOMY!!...
...IN HIS HATE AND TOTAL DISORDER HE GOES TO CRUMB... TO CONFRONT HIM... MAKE HIM ADMIT HE'S A FRAUD...
COME OUT CRUMB... COME OUTTA THERE... I WANNA TELL YOU TO YOUR FACE WHAT A PHONY HACK YOU ARE...
... IN HIS PAIN AND INSECURITY JENNY ENTERS CRUMB'S DARK HOUSE... ENTERS AND GROPES FOR THE LIGHT-SWITCH... AND AS HE FLICKS IT IS CONFRONTED BY UTTER HORROR...
MY GOD... ...WHAT IS THIS PLACE... ...THESE PAINTINGS... HE'S NEVER SHOWN THESE THINGS ANYWHERE PUBLICLY... NO WONDER... THEY'RE TOTALLY DEGENERATED...
...IN HIS SELF-PITY AND MINDLESS ANGER HE CLIMBS THE STAIRS... SCREAMING OUT HIS LUNGS AFTER CRUMB... DEMANDING HIS ATTENTION...
CRUMB!... CRUMB GET DOWN HERE... YOU LUNATIC... WHERE ARE YOU?
...AND WHEN HE SEES THE EYES IN THE GROTESQUE SELF-PORTRAIT OF CRUMB THE ARTIST, HIS STOMACH LURCHES AND TURNS...
...OH GOD... ...GOD...

...AND IN HIS SICK, DISEASED MIND, JENNY CAN ONLY THINK OF DESTROYING HIS COMPETITOR...
DIE YOU MONSTER... ...DIE...
...YOU FIEND... INHUMAN...GROTESQUE... UGLY CREEP...
...AND DESTROY CRUMB THE MASTER HE DOES...
...OH GOD... ...GOD...
...THE THING IN THE PAINTING CRAWLS OUT AND SCRATCHES AT THE AIR GRABBING AND GRASPING AT HIS MURDERER...
...WHY?... ...COULDN'T YOU LET WELL ENOUGH ALONE? ...WHY JENNY?..
WHY? ...OH GOD...


...YOU KILL ME JENNY... YOU KILL MY WORKS... WHY?
...AND WHEN THE OTHER THINGS COME OUT OF THEIR HOUSES' JACK JENNY GOES COMPLETELY MAD...
...WHAT ELSE HAPPENED IN THAT HOUSE THAT NIGHT WE CAN'T ENTIRELY SAY... BECAUSE IT... IT CAN'T REALLY BE PUT INTO WORDS NOT EVEN... INTO PICTURES!!
...BUT LET US JOIN THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PERIODICAL ILLUSTRATORS ON THEIR JULY 4TH AWARD'S NIGHT... FOR A FEW PARTING WORDS...
...AND SO WE PRESENT OUR ANNUAL AWARD TO JAY CRUMB... POST-HUMOUSLY...
... MR. CRUMB'S DEATH IS UNTIMELY... HE WAS AN ARTIST WHO WAS WIDELY CONTROVERSIAL... PERHAPS HIS LAST AND GREATEST PAINTING ILLUSTRATES WHY... HE WAS FOUND DEAD BESIDE IT... MURDERED BY AN UNKNOWN ASSAILANT...
...APPARENTLY HE WAS IN THE PROCESS OF AN EXPERIMENT
...NOTICE THE RAISED 3-D EFFECT? ...THIS IS A THING OF WRETCHED, AWFUL EVIL...

. . . we hope you enjoyed this screaming collection of lunatic stories from the SKYWALD HORROR-MOOD LIBRARY OF ILLUSTRATED TALES . . . if you did, you will also enjoy our companion magazines published bi-monthly, and available at your local newsstand . . .

. . . our two companion titles are about to celebrate their 15th ISSUES . . . and in so doing we begin PHASE THREE of the HORROR-MOOD . . .

. . . PHASE ONE was a period of EXPERIMENTATION, and we tried just about every new approach we could think of . . . everything from a new look to our contents pages to a new story format, with stories being told over a two page spread instead of the usual page-to-page style . . .

. . . PHASE TWO was a period of READERSHIP PARTICIPATION, and through our BUNCH OF QUESTIONS and our BIGGER BUNCH OF QUESTIONS we found out what you liked and wanted, what you disliked and didn't want, and what you couldn't care less about . . .

. . . PHASE THREE begins NOW . . . this is where we take what we've learned and SWING INTO ACTION . . . and two things we've learned from PHASES ONE and TWO is that (a) you LIKE us to experiment occasionally, and (b) we can LEARN from your participation how we can entertain you best . . . so PHASE THREE is UNDERWAY . . . a blending of what we've tried and what we've learned . . . a MASTER-BLEND of what you said you wanted and our trying our best to give it to you . . . the ingredients that make up PSYCHO and NIGHTMARE and SCREAM are GUARANTEED to be 100% HORROR

NIGHTMARE PSYCHO

SCREAM

...NOT EVERYBODY KNOWS **HOW** TO **SCREAM**... BECAUSE NOT EVERYBODY KNOWS **WHY** TO **SCREAM**...

WE WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO **SCREAM** LIKE YOU'VE NEVER **SCREAMED** BEFORE... 'TILL YOUR **MIND** AND **BRAIN** ARE EXPLODING WITH LUNATIC **SCREAMS**

...YOU **FIRST** NEED A **REASON** TO **SCREAM**... LIFT UP YOUR EYES AND LOOK AT THE **VAMPIRE BAT** HANGING ABOVE...

...DO YOU FEEL ITS ROTTED **TEETH** SINKING INTO YOUR **NECK** AND SUCKING OUT YOUR **PRECIOUS BODY FLUIDS**....?

...NOW...LOOK **LEFT**... DO YOU FEEL THE **WRETCHED EYES** UPON YOU?... DO YOU SENSE THE PRESENCE OF SOMETHING **DEAD**...?

...NOW...YOU **SEE** THE FETID **EYES** CUTTING INTO **YOURS**... AND YOU **SEE** THE **THING** THAT IS **DEAD** ABOUT TO **OBLITERATE** YOU FROM THIS **EARTH**...

...NOW LOOK **RIGHT**... DO YOU FEEL LIKE **CHOKING** AT THE **SIGHT** OF... :

...**THE THING THAT SLITHERS.!**

...THE **OPEN** YOUR **MOUTH**, CLOSE YOUR **EYES**... THE SWELLING **SOUND** WITHIN YOU IS COMING **NATURALLY**...

...AND THAT MACABRE **SOUND** IS A **SCREAM!**

...AND NOW YOU ARE **QUIET**... EXCEPT... FOR YOUR UNCONTROLLED **WEEPING**...

...**THIS**... IS WHERE YOU WILL LEARN AWFUL **REASONS** TO **SCREAM**... INSIDE THIS FETID FIRST ISSUE...